OL. XLVI, Part 2 SPRING NUMBER, 1950 No. 294
Published 1st March

THE DICKENSIAN

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L. A. G. Strong

DICKENS CLASHES WITH HIS PUBLISHER
II.
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PICTURES FROM GENOA
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T. W. Hill

THE DICKENSIAN BACKGROUND
P. R. Aytiman

AND OTHER ARTICLES

ILLUSTRATED

EDITED BY LESLIE C. STAPLES

PUBLISHED BY THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP AT
THE DICKENS HOUSE, 48 DOUGHTY STREET,
LONDON, W.C. 1

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE
Subscription rate: Ten Shillings and Sixpence, per annum, post free.

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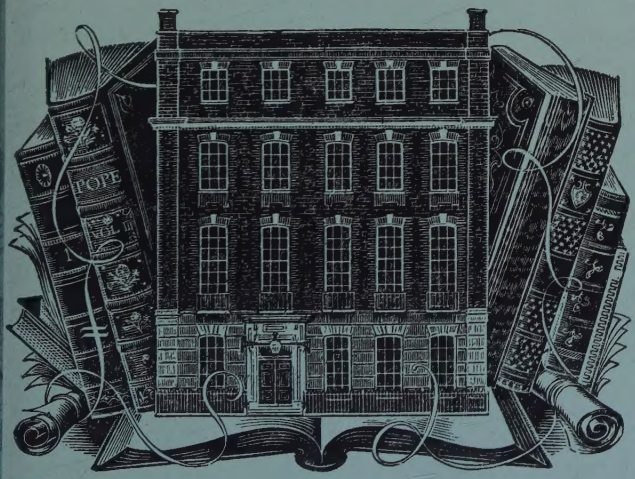

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Reproduced, for the first time, from *The Lady's Newspaper*, 14th July, 1855.

The play is to be revived by
The Dickens Fellowship
on April, 22nd.

(*see page* 60).

THE DICKENSIAN

SPRING NUMBER

VOL. XLVI. 1st MARCH, 1950 No. 294

WHEN FOUND—

The Birthday. The 138th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens was celebrated by most branches of the Dickens Fellowship, and in London by a Dinner at the Dorchester Hotel on February 7th at which the traditional toast of *The Immortal Memory* of the author was proposed by Sir Thomas Beecham, Bt., in a speech that will be published in our next number.

* * * * *

Conference at St. Anne's. Plans are all but completed for the Forty-fourth Annual Conference which will be held at St. Anne's-on-Sea from 19th to 22nd of May. This will be the first Conference to be held in the North for some years, and Mrs. Graystock, the Hon. Secretary of the local Branch of the Fellowship, and her colleagues, have spared no pains to prepare a hearty Lancashire welcome for their visitors. St. Anne's, and the adjoining Lytham, will be found to be attractive coast resorts with the same highly beneficial air as their more celebrated neighbour, Blackpool, but without that town's exuberance. The traditional pilgrimage on the Monday will take the visitors across the country by road to Yorkshire and provide them with a valuable opportunity to see "the delightful village of Dotheboys near Greta Bridge." If you have not yet made your reservations, ask your Hon. Secretary for a programme or write to Mrs. Graystock whose address will be found on page 112 and on the back cover of this number.

* * * * *

The David Copperfield Centenary. Celebrations of the centenary of *David Copperfield* continue. The memorable address on the novel given to the Dickens Fellowship last October by Mr. L. A. G. Strong, appears in this number by the generosity of that gifted author. It is indeed an experience to turn from the work of professional biographers to that of a creative artist who not only has the biographical details at his command but has also a profound understanding of how the mind of a creative artist works. We are also privileged to publish the first part of an analysis of *David Copperfield* with special reference to its subdivision into monthly parts, by Professor John Butt, who needs no introduction to our readers after his contribution to our *David Copperfield* Centenary Number.

* * * * *

A great-grandson's Copperfield Recital. On December 12th Mr. R. C. D. Shuckburgh gave a highly successful recital from his great-grandfather's masterpiece at the Chenil Gallery, Chelsea, before a distinguished audience. Mr. Shuckburgh, following the tradition established by his grandfather, Sir Henry F. Dickens in this field, was ably assisted by a *Prologue* specially written by Mr. Dennis Birch, spoken by Mr. Paul Grant, and which appears on another page, a character study of Micawber by Mr. John Greaves, a playlet, *David Asks Leave to Pay His Addresses*, by members of the Dickens Fellowship, produced by Mrs. Jane Bacon, and a musical interlude by Miss Elwyn Bateman. The Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial) benefited by more than £70.

London revives its Christmas Party.

David Copperfield was also the theme of the first Dickens Costume Christmas Party to be given by the Fellowship in London since before the war. Dan'l Peggotty and his family received the company in his boathouse—and although the numbers were not comparable with those which attended former Christmas Parties at Caxton Hall, many members considered it even more successful. Nearly everyone wore Dickensian costume and for four hours the fun waxed fast and furious with dances and interpolated items from *David Copperfield*, concluding with the time-honoured *Sir Roger de Coverley* and the entrance of lantern-bearing carol-singers into a darkened hall.

* * * * *

The Lighthouse.

This year's dramatic production by the Dickens Fellowship in London follows a precedent set up in 1934 when *The Frozen Deep* was performed. On April 22nd there will be given at the Rudolf Steiner Hall, two performances of *The Lighthouse*. This melodrama was specially written by Wilkie Collins for Dickens and his amateur company at Tavistock House in June, 1855, and, except for one professional revival a few years later by "the great little Robson" at the Olympic Theatre, has not been seen since. The play, as far as we can discover has, unlike *The Frozen Deep*, never been printed, but a manuscript copy is to be found in the Forster Collection at South Kensington and the text of this will be used. The original MS is in the New York Public Library. Our frontispiece is a representation of the illustration of a performance at Campden House on July 10th, 1855, which appeared in *The Lady's Newspaper*, for July 14th. It has never previously been reprinted and shows Collins as Martin Gurnock, Miss Hogarth as Lady Grace and Dickens as old Aaron. In this year's revival Mrs. Alec Waley (Elaine Dickens) will play the part created by her great-aunt Georgina Hogarth. Dickens's Prologue will be spoken by Mr. Frank Pettingell.

* * * * *

The Walter Dexter Memorial.

The Walter Dexter Memorial Fund for the Endowment of the Dickens House has reached its original objective of £5,000 but the small income resulting from post-war financial conditions renders imperative the extension of the target to £10,000. Every effort is being made to reach that sum by the date of the Fellowship's Jubilee in 1952, although not every branch has yet reported to London its intentions in this respect. Of London's self-appointed target of £1,500, £700 has been raised since the Broadstairs Conference in May.

* * * * *

Mr. and Mrs. Newbery.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the generous donation of £100 to the Fund from Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Newbery, of Southend. It was only six months ago that tribute was paid in this place to Mrs. Newbery's devoted service to the Fellowship and now, as we go to press, comes the news of the death of her husband. Our deepest sympathy is extended to her in her bereavement.

* * * * *

Mr. Wm. A. Clark's Photographs.

The Dickens Section of the Exhibition of Photographs by Mr. Wm. A. Clark, F.R.P.S., held recently at the Guildhall Art Gallery, London, has been presented by the photographer to the Dickens House, where, in frames also presented by the donor, they will be shown serially. These important additions to the topographical collections at Doughty Street are most welcome not only for their historic value but for their beauty as works of art. Mr. Clark is cordially thanked for his generosity.

American Publications. Two important books for review have reached us from Messrs. Simon and Schuster of New York. The first is a handsome *Pickwick*, in the " Inner Sanctum " Edition. This beautifully produced volume runs to over eight hundred pages and includes the Pickwick passages from *Master Humphrey's Clock*. There is a long introduction which contains some astonishing errors and we may be permitted to wonder whether the " findings " of twentieth century biographers are happily placed in such a book as *Pickwick*. The novel end-papers take the form of a map of the various Pickwickian tours : but who in *Pickwick* visited Norwich ? The *raison d'être* of the volume is however the illustrations of Frederick E. Banbery. These are of the modern technique such as those with which Topolski has familiarised us, but while not being usually prepossessed by this style it has to be admitted that Mr. Banbery is wholly successful and we have spent a long time in delighted examination of the drawings. Here is the work of a really first-class draughtsman, who, as an Englishman, knows and loves his *Pickwick*. Nearly a hundred of the familiar characters are indexed as being illustrated, apart from numerous other delightful decorations. Truly a proud addition to any Pickwickian's library. But book-lovers, as opposed to book-sellers, will not forbear to express regret that the beautifully-coloured illustrations on the dust-wrapper are repeated only in black and white in the book. Dust wrappers are such perishable things and this one is a joy. (Price $5,00.) The other volume is *A Treasury of Great Reporting* edited by Louis L. Snyder and Richard B. Morris. This is another finely produced book of nearly the size of the *Pickwick* and is a most comprehensive anthology of the work of the world's most famous reporters. Its interest in this place is that Dickens is represented by passages from *Pictures from Italy*. (Price $5.00.)

* * * * *

" Mournful Statue." It is usual to rejoice when a familiar Dickens landmark is detailed for restoration, but possibly rejoicing is misplaced on hearing that the monument described in *Nicholas Nickleby* as a " mournful statue, guardian genius of a little wilderness of shrubs," is to receive restorative attention. Do you remember it ? It adorns (?) Golden Square and represents George II. Having been placed there as long ago as 1753, removed from Canons Park, Edgware, it was already " mournful " in 1838, was repaired about forty years ago and now again frankly dilapidated. There is talk of its " rehabilitation." If that is accomplished it will still be a memorial, though a poor one, to the former splendours of the neighbourhood, but we plead that it should remain as it is, a reminder of Charles Dickens and his London romance, *Nicholas Nickleby*.

* * * * *

Canadian Broadcasts of Dickens. Reports reach us of the success of the serial broadcasting of *Nicholas Nickleby* by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. As in the case of last winter's serial of *Pickwick* the adaptation and presentation is in the hands of Tommy Tweed to whom we owe an apology. In mentioning his broadcast *Pickwick* some time ago we inadvertently referred to him as an American, whereas we are informed that not only is he resident in, and working in, Toronto but is an enthusiast for the work of the branch of the Fellowship in that city.

* * * * *

George Orwell. We should like to honour the memory of Eric Blair, known to his readers as George Orwell, whose recent death at the age of 46 has left a noticeable gap among contemporary essayists. We recall with gratitude his tribute to

Dickens at the Conference Luncheon in 1940 and his attractive book *Inside the Whale* which was reviewed in our columns in the same year. It was republished as *Critical Essays* in 1946. Mr. Orwell's tolerance of other people's opinions coupled with modesty regarding his own attainments were his chief characteristics.

* * * * *

Count d'Orsay's Portraits. The sale at Sotheby's of the great library of the late Sir Thomas Phillips, Bt., of Middle Hall, Worcs. and Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham, included a remarkable series of drawings of his contemporaries by Count Alfred d'Orsay. A large number of Dickens's friends figure among his subjects, but the main interest centred in two portraits of Dickens. In addition to the well-known one dated December 16th, 1841, which was reproduced in F. G. Kitton's *Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil*, and many times since, there was another dated December 28th, 1842, but, unlike the familiar one, it is not signed by Dickens.

* * * * *

Mr. Edward Carpenter. As we go to press the Dickens House has received a most interesting addition to its collections. This is a copy of the *Gad's Hill Gazette*, dated January 27th, 1866, the first one to find its way there. The *Gazette* was edited, printed, and published by Henry Fielding Dickens, over a period of several years, while he was at home at Gad's Hill on holidays from college. Full accounts of it may be found in *The Dickensian*, 1910, p. 173, and in the volume for 1929 (p. 255), Sir Henry himself wrote of his editorial memories. It provides a delightful picture of Dickens's life at Gad's Hill. Copies are now both rare and valuable and we are greatly indebted to Mr. Edward Carpenter for making this most generous gift. We simultaneously offer him and Mrs. Carpenter, the warmest welcome to the Dickens Fellowship. Mr. Carpenter last year presented Jane Austen's cottage at Chawton, Hants., to the Jane Austen Society, in memory of his son, a soldier, who gave his life in the recent war.

* * * * *

"Smashing!" Parents who repress their exuberant children when they indulge in the use of the now fashionable adjective "smashing," may be surprised to learn that Dickens himself used it more than once. In November, 1849, he wrote: "Copperfield done after two days' very hard work indeed; and I think a smashing number." He also on one occasion applied the term to a resort in the Isle of Wight.

* * * * *

Was he, indeed! Dr. W. Russell Brain, specialist in nervous diseases, recently contributed an article to the *British Medical Journal* designed to demonstrate that genius is merely another name for insanity, at least, that is how it strikes a layman. Dickens, he tells us, was a "cyclothyme with sado-masochistic tendencies." While pondering a comment on this pronouncement we came across the theory of that fount of wisdom, "Beachcomber" and at once decided that we could not do better than quote it from the columns of the *Daily Express*. It reads: "My own theory is that anyone who thinks Dickens was a sado-masochistic cyclothyme is himself an example of quasi-omniphobe contra-extroversionary stultitude or, more briefly, a snithogrobe."

LESLIE C. STAPLES.

DAVID COPPERFIELD CENTENARY

PROLOGUE

By Dennis Birch

(Spoken by Paul Grant *at Richard C. D. Shuckburgh's Centenary Recital of David Copperfield)*

IS it a hundred years
Since first in laughter changing swift to tears
We came to Blunderstone—the rookless trees
The lattice windows opened to the breeze ?
The old church tower hoist to the Suffolk sky
The sundial watching sunlit hours go by—
Or heard at even soft clip-clopping sound—
Barkis returning from his daily round ?
A hundred years since hand in little hand
David and Em'ly roamed the Yarmouth sand,
Or sat, when night was come, beside the blaze
While Peggotty spun tales of salt-sea days,
And He and Ham mended their nets again ;
And off shore gales howled round the boat in vain . . .
Who crosses London Bridge these latter days
But does not follow David's youthful gaze,
When, from the cellars at long last released,
He'd sit upon the balustrades, and feast
His eyes upon St. Paul's—that distant jewel,
Forests of masts at anchor in the pool—
But who comes here with optimistic gait
And jaunty carriage, hoping soon or late
To meet with fortune—collar flying high ?
Shabby yet all serene he saunters by.
To-day has seen him flung into the Fleet,
Next week will surely set him on his feet.
Dun-dogged and summons-shadowed, on he goes,
Blandly oblivious of our meaner woes—
To-day's unjustified incarceration
Will prove to-morrow reason for elation.
This morning's parting was a tragic wrench,
This evening finds him gracing the King's Bench—
Each morning finds him on the road to fame,
Each evening finds him very much the same—
Forever calm, and hopefully observant,
Wilkins Micawber, Sir, Your humble servant . . .
Who takes the Dover Road can e'er forget
That desperate journey, perilous, beset
By heat and hunger, mile on dusty mile,
Blackheath to Rochester a weary while ?
Chatham, then on through orchards, southwards still—
Until at noon, topping a little hill,
The Towers of Canterbury rise into view,
Like some grey shadow thrown across the blue
Path of the summer sky—out of the town
A few more miles, over the windy down,
At last to Dover—who can e'er forget
That journey's end—bow-windowed cottage set
In a small garden, fragrant with the scent
Of many flowers—a gentleman intent
On fashioning a kite, full six feet high,

Light as a cloud and like a bird to fly.
O the beloved quiet of the green :
Peaceful, secure, untroubled, and serene,
Save when some riders rashly dared defy
The sacred lawn, when the old battle cry
Of " Janet—Donkeys " echoed through the air,
Bidding the hosts to hasten and prepare
To drive th' invaders shrieking from the door
And back to Dover draggletail once more.
Then came those quiet years wherein the boy
Grew to a man—but stop, I must annoy
You with these ramblings—things you know so well,
There is no need to mention or retell.
This tale is not of any time or age—
Part of the pattern of our heritage,
As much as Falstaff, country songs, and Inns,
And cottages lamp-lit when night begins.
And now a century has passed us by :
No traveller hears the coach horn's clamorous cry,
No change of horses in the lantern's light,
No gleam of cheer from tavern windows bright,
No chop-house doors stand welcoming ajar—
No sleepy watch still greets the morning star.
Few Yarmouth schooners the grey waters ride
With sails a'flutter, waiting for the tide.
No carriers' carts go ambling down the lanes
With wrinkled drivers drowsing at the reins.
So the procession passes—one by one—
In sombre shadows or in noontide sun—
And all these people whom I mention seem
Not as the dimlit figures of a dream
But as old friends, people we meet each day,
Cry out " Hullo," and greet them on their way. . .
And so the story ends, but it still lives
The wide world over, and forever gives
Courage and comfort and a sure delight.
So long as men will of a winter night
Sit by the chimney corner with a tale
To keep their mind from wandering to the gale.
So long as laughter still lights up the stage,
So long as each succeeding time and age
Still loves to hear of troubles bravely borne,
Of good companionship, of hopes forlorn
Surviving every fear and at the last
Coming to victory, all dangers past—
So long as simple faith still moves the world,
So long as courage is a flag unfurled
To rouse men's hearts—so long as life is sane
And sound and clean—and every Spring again
Calls us to fresh adventure—just so long
Will all the vivid, gay and jostling throng
That fill those pages, live their life anew
With countless thousands who these paths pursue.
So, welcome all my friends, joined with us here
To celebrate the hundredth glorious year
Of this great story, that from the very start
Has found a place in every reader's heart.

DAVID COPPERFIELD

By L. A. G. Strong

A Lecture delivered to the Dickens Fellowship in London on October 4th, 1949.

IT was, I think, Arnold Bennett who said that the great novelists had, in his sense of the word, no technique at all. That might be taken as a reflection on Bennett: and it is the sort of remark that is seized upon by the avid legion of the incompetent, who, unable or unwilling to acquire a technique, deny its value. The remark has to be accepted with caution: but I think it is quite easy to see what Bennett meant. He didn't mean that only the lesser novelists need consider technique, or that it could ever be a substitute for inspiration. He meant that the greatest novelists are possessed by such a gigantic creative vitality that, whatever they deliberately intend, the work takes charge and emerges as something incalculably and uncontrollably different. It doesn't matter what technical plans they make: the final book is something they did not foresee, at any rate in the form in which it appears.

We need to qualify this, of course. There *are* deliberate masterpieces with a controlled symmetry and architecture. But they are rare. In the English novel they are very rare. The English novel has a trick of triumphantly surpassing its programme. The great Victorian novelists very often started with a propaganda purpose which should have swamped and stifled any work of art. The results were often magnificent, because the novelists had such creative powers that any pretext was good enough to set them going. Consciously, deliberately, they started: then their inspiration, their unconscious sources of energy, took charge, laughingly elbowed aside the programme, or even accepted and transformed it, and the great novel was under weigh.

Of no one was this truer than of Dickens. Dickens had the greatest gift of creative vitality ever given to a British novelist. His plans for his novels, the conditions under which they were produced, were scandalously inappropriate. Either he set out to show up a contemporary abuse, or he wrote serial instalments month by month, or both. Usually both. It didn't matter. From that huge creative reservoir fish after queer fish swam to the surface. In next to no time a new world had sprung into being, peopled by autocratic personages, larger than human, who took complete charge of it, reducing the novelist to the stature of an awe-stricken amanuensis whose task was to record their doings. An exultant amanuensis: now and then a baffled amanuensis, when for a time they withheld their favours: but, for the most part, a ready chronicler, whom in their indulgence they permitted to remember, every now and then, what he had thought he was writing about, and slip in a bit until they were ready to go on.

If in this I seem to any of you to be reducing the stature of the novelist, it is because—forgive me—you do not understand what is his province and where his virtue resides. Cecil Day Lewis has said, I think profoundly, "Every poem is a grasping in the dark after truth. A poet works to find a truth which he does not perceive at the outset." It is the same with a novel. The other day, when I had been talking about novels, a woman in the audience complained that modern novelists probed into depths they did not understand. Of course they do. What would be the sense of probing into a depth we did understand? There would be nothing to find. No—far from seeking to belittle the calling I humbly follow, I am making for it the only claim really worth making. I claim that the novelist is a kind of seer, and, like all the seers, can do no more than submit himself to the ritual, assume the posture, and await what the Muse or the God shall show him.

Very well. Dickens is our supreme British novelist, and *David Copperfield* is by common consent one of his greatest novels. Many judges put it first. It has great faults. To say that is not to belittle it, or to exhibit the cavilling, fault-finding smallness of the minor practitioner. This novel is a work of genius. A work of genius will very often have large faults, glaring faults. All its qualities will be on the largest scale. Where it goes wrong, it will go very wrong. Or, quite simply, it will lack certain qualities altogether. It will have gaps, great yawning emptinesses like those the astronomer shudders at, vast darknesses where there is no star. You can spend all the evening picking flaws in a work of genius, you can list its crudities and laugh at its absurdities, and, when you have finished, it will stand up, like a rock unharmed by the breakers, ready for the next assault and the next tide.

So let me go on record, before I begin, by saying that *David Copperfield* is a magnificent novel, a work of great genius, informed with an almost terrifying creative power ; a book of extraordinary beauty ; a book which, if Dickens had been able to shake himself free of certain prejudices of his time, would have been one of the greatest masterpieces of all time. We must not forget that Dostoevsky proclaimed Dickens as his mentor and his master ; but the Russian genius was quick to see and point out those fetters by which the English genius was hampered, those aspects of life from which Dickens, who was far from squeamish, shied off in his work, aspects which Dostoevsky could examine unfettered. When, therefore, I point out this or that flaw in *David Copperfield*, I am not indulging in any so-called modern denigration of a master, or in debunking, or whatever the process may be called. I am merely affirming that Dickens was a genius, and that everything genius does is larger than human, whether it succeeds or whether it fails.

* * * * *

First, the circumstances in which *David Copperfield* was written. It was begun a hundred years ago. A chance question about someone who had known him when he was a boy, at the most unhappy stage of his tormented childhood, set Dickens brooding on the past. It is one of the consolations of being a writer that he can get a painful experience out of his system by making it the stuff of a novel, a poem, or a play. Thus externalised, the hurt ceases to give pain ; and he no longer wakes up squirming in the night at the memory of an embarrassment or a blunder, once it has been thus painfully exorcised into print. So Dickens, some weeks after the painful reminder, started to write down the details which had so hurt him. He told his friend Forster that the memories were so painful they must always hurt him ; and, when he first wrote them down, he does not seem to have had any clear idea of using them. He was simply getting the painful stuff out of his system, in the same way as the devout tell it in the confessional, and other people tell it to a psychiatrist. He knew that to make it objective, to put it outside him, was to break its power over him. I expect he knew, too, that the act of writing it down would dredge up those aspects of it, those associations, which were not consciously recalled, but which had sunk into the depths of his mind.

But Dickens was a professional writer, and he very soon conceived the idea of making part at any rate of this material the basis for a novel. He had played with the idea of an autobiography. Maybe he shrank from the complete exposure of this ; but he soon saw that a novel would give him a far better chance. In a novel he could do more than record what had happened. He could record what should have happened. He could redress the balance. The child hero of the novel, the boy that was father to the man, could have the childhood that

Dickens should have had, and so become the man that Dickens should have been.

The interest which *David Copperfield* has for us depends first of all, of course, on its sheer quality as a novel. But we should not be human if we were not interested in the light it sheds on the man who wrote it : if we did not wonder how near David Copperfield, child, boy, and man, comes to Charles Dickens, his creator. If the novel followed step by step the early history of Dickens it would indeed be interesting, because we should have a chance of seeing not only what Dickens did and what happened to him, but how he felt about it. Actually, the novel does more for us than that. It does not accurately follow Dickens's early history. It remodels it, and in remodelling it, it shows us what Dickens would have liked to happen. We see not only the hurt Dickens, the child crushed and worried by poverty and unkindness, but the frustrated Dickens, giving himself the treat which actual life had denied him.

I shall be coming back to this point. But let us for the moment finish with the actual circumstances in which the novel was written. As soon as he had settled that it was to be a novel, Dickens decided that, as usual, it should be published serially in instalments. This method of instalments had been a disadvantage from the artistic point of view. Dickens was very busy. He was an editor, a social light, a world figure by now, engaged on all manner of social reforms ; and he was apt to rely on his vigorous imagination, his tremendous creative energy, to produce the instalment by the time it was needed. Given a theme and a handful of characters, he could go on indefinitely. Such a book as *Martin Chuzzlewit* shows the drawbacks of this method of composition. It contains some of his greatest triumphs, but it has very little shape, very little structure, and parts of it have nothing at all to do with the main line of the story. *David Copperfield* is far more composed. It shows more care, and a better balance between its parts. True, the latter part is not as good as the first, for reasons that we shall be considering in a few minutes. But this is only to say that no impressions are so clear or so deep as the impressions which are stamped on us in childhood, and that Dickens, bringing the full power of his genius to bear on what had seared and charmed him, reached a level he was never to touch again.

Another point : *David Copperfield* took a very long time to write. It got off to a good start, and for a while Dickens wrote easily. Whenever a difficulty cropped up, he would dash off for a couple of days to the sea. These excursions worked so well that presently he went off with the entire family—a new son, his sixth, had been born less than a fortnight after the book was begun—and settled in the Isle of Wight. He wrote every morning till dinner at two o'clock, and frolicked for the rest of the day with children and friends. This lasted for quite a while, and the manuscript grew fast. Then he took a dislike to the place, found he could not work there any longer, and so the whole outfit went to Broadstairs. This did the trick, and *David Copperfield* came to life again.

His energy renewed by the change, Dickens took on the editing of a weekly magazine, which he called *Household Words*. Besides editing this, he wrote a great deal of it. Presently he was in the forefront of a movement designed to make writers co-operate in the furtherance of their own interests, a sort of forerunner of the Society of Authors. These activities delayed the finishing of his novel, but we can't be sure that they worsened it. Genius commands immense vitality. Whereas a lesser talent might be exhausted by so much activity, it seems as if sometimes a greater talent is stimulated by it, and raised to a higher creative pitch. Anyhow, that is how *David Copperfield* was written, steadily at first, then with increasing interruptions.

I said just now that in this novel Dickens was compensating himself for some of the things which had happened to him in his childhood. Needless to say, the book is a great deal more than an essay in wish-fulfilment. Dickens's genius was so strong—let me repeat this—that, whatever the motive with which he started, the characters, and the comic figures especially, would sprout up with vigorous growth, take complete charge, and dictate the atmosphere of the story. They had always done that before. But now, for the first time, there was a difference. In all his previous novels Dickens had set out, whether by design or simply because it was his nature, to create a world of his own. Although the detail of his novels was marvellously realistic, the novels themselves were not. The characters were larger than human, they were always consistent, they came in like sandwich men bearing a label which they never put down. They belonged to the old English tradition of the humours of which the first exponent had been Ben Jonson. And these fantastic characters created their own world, a dream world, a world of fantasy. Once again, the detail was realistic. Miss Rebecca West, chronicling an assignment given her by an evening newspaper to attend political meetings in the East End of London, records the frequency with which she met Dickens characters. The world of the Cockney is still capable of documenting a fantasy, just as is the world of Dublin. But the London of Dickens, though it derived its idiom from the real London in a way that is still perfectly recognisable, was none the less a distillation, an essence, a fantasy.

* * * * *

In *David Copperfield*, however, Dickens deliberately set himself a new task. He undertook to tell the complete truth about a limited number of human beings. Instead of merely supplying a story with realistic detail, and making it convincing by means of realistic detail, he set out to write a realistic novel. He set out to write a novel about the world in which he lived, rather than the world which it had delighted him to create.

He was not able to stay the course. The first part of *David Copperfield*, the childhood part, is unsurpassed in honesty, beauty and truth. It was something new in the English novel. It had an originality which we can only assess by looking at the novels which had been written before it. What is more, the characters who arise out of the story, though they bear a recognisable relationship to the characters in Dickens's previous novels, have a new reality. They develop out of the honesty of the novelist's intention. Indeed, before the end of the novel they have become so real, some of them, that Dickens cannot live with them any more. He has to pack them off the scene in an almost panic-stricken manner, with a sudden total disregard for plausibility and for the essence of their own reality. Dickens's imagination, the unconscious depths from which his vision rose, was far stronger than his technical ability to construct and manage a novel. The narrowed world in which the novel ends, the hard-won peace of David and Agnes, could not for a moment stand beside the enormous reality of Mr. Micawber or even old Peggotty. So Dickens packs them off to Australia, where, we are given to understand, all will be well with them. But it is hard to see how being packed off to Australia can solve Mr. Micawber's problems. Mr. Micawber's problems arise from his character, and you do not change a character simply by making him live somewhere else. It was the essence of Mr. Micawber that he could not live within the space-time system in which he found himself. His whole life was a perpetual overdraft on the future. He spent his days in waiting for something to turn up; and there is no reason to suppose that an optimism which had no roots in reality would yield any better results in Australia than it had at home.

But let us look for a moment at the early part of the novel, in which Dickens has captured so miraculously the fresh perceptions and apprehensions of a child. Here is little David's account of his home, and of being taken to church on Sunday mornings :

> Here is a long passage—what an enormous perspective I make of it !—leading from Peggotty's kitchen to the front-door. A dark store-room opens out of it, and that is a place to be run past at night ; for I don't know what may be among those tubs and jars and old tea-chests, when there is nobody in there with a dimly-burning light, letting a mouldy air come out at the door, in which there is the smell of soap, pickles, pepper, candles, and coffee, all at one whiff.
>
> Then there are the two parlours ; the parlour in which we sit of an evening, my mother and I and Peggotty—for Peggotty is quite our companion, when her work is done and we are alone—and the best parlour where we sit on a Sunday ; grandly, but not so comfortably. There is something of a doleful air about that room to me, for Peggotty has told me—I don't know when, but apparently ages ago—about my father's funeral, and the company having their black cloaks put on. On Sunday night my mother reads to Peggotty and me in there, how Lazarus was raised up from the dead. And I am so frightened that they are afterwards obliged to take me out of bed, and show me the quiet churchyard out of the bedroom window, with the dead all lying in their graves at rest, below the solemn moon.
>
> There is nothing half so green that I know anywhere as the grass of that churchyard ; nothing half so shady as its trees ; nothing half so quiet as its tombstones. The sheep are feeding there, when I kneel up, early in the morning, in my little bed in a closet within my mother's room, to look out at it ; and I see the red light shining on the sun-dial, and think within myself, " Is the sun-dial glad, I wonder, that it can tell the time again ? "
>
> Here is our pew in the church. What a high-backed pew ! With a window near it, out of which our house can be seen, and *is* seen many times during the morning's service, by Peggotty, who likes to make herself as sure as she can that it's not being robbed, or is not in flames. But though Peggotty's eye wanders, she is much offended if mine does, and frowns to me, as I stand upon the seat, that I am to look at the clergyman. But I can't always look at him—I know him without that white thing on, and I am afraid of his wondering why I stare so, and perhaps stopping the service to inquire—and what am I to do ? It's a dreadful thing to gape, but I must do something. I look at my mother, but *she* pretends not to see me. I look at a boy in the aisle, and *he* makes faces at me. I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep—I don't mean a sinner, but mutton—half making up his mind to come into the church. I feel that if I looked at him any longer, I might be tempted to say something out loud ; and what would become of me then ? I look up at the monumental tablets on the wall, and try to think of Mr. Bodgers late of this parish, and what the feelings of Mrs. Bodgers must have been, when afflictions sore, long time Mr. Bodgers bore, and physicians were in vain. I wonder whether they called in Mr. Chillip, and he was in vain ; and if so, how he likes to be reminded of it once a week. I look from Mr. Chillip, in his Sunday neckcloth, to the pulpit ; and think what a good place it would be to play in, and what a castle it would make, with another boy coming up the stairs to attack it, and having the velvet cushion with the tassels thrown down on his head. In time my eyes gradually shut up ; and, from seeming to hear the clergyman singing a drowsy song in the heat, I hear nothing, until I fall off the seat with a crash, and am taken out, more dead than alive, by Peggotty.

One of my clearest schoolroom recollections is of a dozen eleven- and twelve-year-olds, myself among them, being introduced to that chapter. It delighted us all. We recognised it. The novelist could have no greater tribute.

Let me give you one more short passage, just after David has arrived at the Peggottys' home in the upturned boat :

> After tea, when the door was shut and all was made snug (the nights being cold and misty now), it seemed to me the most delicious retreat that the imagination of man could conceive. To hear the wind getting up out at sea, to know that the fog was creeping over the desolate flat outside, and to look at the fire and think that there was no house near but this one, and this one a boat, was like enchantment. Little Em'ly had overcome her shyness, and was sitting by my side upon the lowest and least of the lockers, which was just large enough for us two, and just fitted into the chimney corner. Mrs. Peggotty, with the white apron, was knitting on the opposite side of the fire. Peggotty at her needlework was as much at home with Saint Paul's and the bit of wax-candle, as if they had never known any other roof. Ham, who had been giving me my first lesson in all fours, was trying to recollect a scheme of telling fortunes with the dirty cards, and was printing off fishy impressions of his thumb on all the cards he turned. Mr. Peggotty was smoking his pipe. I felt it was a time for conversation and confidence.
>
> " Mr. Peggotty ! " says I.
> " Sir," says he.

"Did you give your son the name of Ham, because you lived in a sort of ark?"

Mr. Peggotty seemed to think it a deep idea, but answered:

"No, sir. I never giv him no name."

"Who gave him that name, then?" said I, putting question number two of the catechism to Mr. Peggotty.

"Why, sir, his father giv it him," said Mr. Peggotty.

"I thought you were his father!"

"My brother Joe was *his* father," said Mr. Peggotty.

"Dead, Mr. Peggotty?" I hinted, after a respectful pause.

"Drowndead," said Mr. Peggotty.

I was very much surprised that Mr. Peggotty was not Ham's father, and began to wonder whether I was mistaken about his relationship to anybody else there. I was so curious to know, that I made up my mind to have it out with Mr. Peggotty.

"Little Em'ly," I said, glancing at her. "She is your daughter, isn't she, Mr. Peggotty?"

"No, sir. My brother-in-law, Tom, was *her* father."

I couldn't help it. "—Dead, Mr. Peggotty?" I hinted, after another respectful silence

"Drowndead," said Mr. Peggotty.

I felt the difficulty of resuming the subject, but had not got to the bottom of it yet and must get to the bottom somehow. So I said:

"Haven't you *any* children, Mr. Peggotty?"

"No, master," he answered, with a short laugh. "I'm a bacheldore."

"A bachelor!" I said, astonished. "Why, who's that, Mr. Peggotty?" Pointing to the person in the apron who was knitting.

"That's Missis Gummidge," said Mr. Peggotty.

"Gummidge, Mr. Peggotty?"

But at this point Peggotty—I mean my own peculiar Peggotty—made such impressive motions to me not to ask any more questions, that I could only sit and look at all the silent company, until it was time to go to bed.

The episode of the waiter on the journey to school, the arrival at Betsey Trotwood's, the details of her endless war upon the donkeys—these and many other of the earlier episodes have the stamp of total truth. And when presently the story broadens, and becomes more like other novels, when the recognisable types appear, they are still more solid and convincing than ever before. The handsome and dashing Steerforth is a stock figure, certainly, but a stock figure for whom David—I almost said Dickens—cannot conceal his admiration. Everyone, old Peggotty included, has to fall before his charm. The story of Steerforth and little Emily is the old melodrama, but the place and the circumstances in which it happens give it a new truth. But Steerforth is only a light-weight villain, and we feel that Dickens lets him off lightly—as lightly as he can. He cannot even deputise for the real evil Dickens always needed; and Uriah Heep, when he comes, is a great improvement on the Quilps and the Monks and the Jonas Chuzzlewits who preceded him. He is even given a touch of sympathy; or, if you think that too strong a word, let us say that Dickens is careful to document him, and to give us some sort of explanation for his warped and frustrated nature:

"There now!" said Uriah, looking flabby and lead-coloured in the moonlight. "Didn't I know it! But how little you think of the right umbleness of a person in my station, Master Copperfield! Father and me was both brought up at a foundation school for boys; and mother, she was likewise brought up at a public, sort of charitable, establishment. They taught us all a deal of umbleness—not much else that I know of, from morning to night. We was to be umble to this person, and umble to that; and to pull off our caps here, and to make bows there; and always to know our place, and abase ourselves before our betters. And we had such a lot of betters! Father got the monitor-medal by being umble. So did I. Father got made a sexton by being umble. He had the character, among the gentlefolks, of being such a well-behaved man, that they were determined to bring him in. 'Be umble, Uriah,' says father to me, 'and you'll get on. It was what was always being dinned into you and me at school; it's what goes down best. Be umble,' says father, 'and you'll do!' And really it ain't done bad!"

It was the first time it had ever occurred to me, that this detestable cant of false humility might have originated out of the Heep family. I had seen the harvest, but had never thought of the seed.

"When I was quite a young boy," said Uriah, "I got to know what umbleness did, and I took to it. I ate umble pie with an appetite. I stopped at the umble point of my learning, and says I, 'Hold hard!' When you offered to teach me Latin, I knew better. 'People like to be above you,' says father, 'keep yourself down.' I am very umble to the present moment, Master Copperfield, but I've got a little power!"

This conscientiousness of the novelist is a sign of a new obligation felt and accepted. There is to be no spontaneous combustion in this story. Even the monster from the shadow side of life must be explained in terms of human nature as the reader knows it. It is not enough that he should pop up through his trap door from the nether regions.

So continues the story of David, who, like Dickens, had a hard childhood, but, unlike Dickens, came into the kindly care of Dr. Strong; who, like Dickens, worked at the law, but, unlike Dickens, came to a secure and honourable post in Doctors Commons; and who, when he came to matrimony, had the experience of marrying two different women, each the antithesis of the other. Shall a man hesitate whether to marry a little fluttering piece of femininity, a child-wife, who will look up to him and nestle in his arms for protection, or choose a calm and sensible helpmate, to whom he looks up, and who will protect him? David solves the problem by marrying both. He settles down in the end with the calm and steady and sensible and affectionate Agnes (do not let us forget the "affectionate": Agnes has had a good deal less than her due from the critics), but not before he has had his fling, if I may be allowed to put it so coarsely, with the fragile and fluttering and purposely childlike Dora. He has it both ways.

* * * * *

We must, I think, stop for a few minutes to examine this problem of Dora and Agnes. Dora is a formidable character, a potential destroyer of her own happiness and other peoples'. The death of Mr. Spenlow—it *could* happen, I agree, but I think that most novelists would eye it askance as a contrivance—the death of Mr. Spenlow makes the marriage inevitable. The danger signals have been shown before; once by Betsey Trotwood, who exclaims to David, "Blind! Blind!", a comment which David disregards, though he records it; and most clearly, in the following passage:

> Miss Lavinia then arose, and begging Mr. Traddles to excuse us for a minute, requested me to follow her. I obeyed, all in a tremble, and was conducted into another room. There I found my blessed darling stopping her ears behind the door, with her dear little face against the wall; and Jip in the plate-warmer with his head tied up in a towel. Oh! How beautiful she was in her black frock, and how she sobbed and cried at first, and wouldn't come out from behind the door! How fond we were of one another, when she did come out at last; and what a state of bliss I was in, when we took Jip out of the plate-warmer, and restored him to the light, sneezing very much, and were all three re-united!
>
> "My dearest Dora! Now, indeed, my own for ever!"
>
> "Oh DON'T!" pleaded Dora. "Please!"
>
> "Are you not my own for ever, Dora?"
>
> "Oh yes, of course I am!" cried Dora, "but I am so frightened!"
>
> "Frightened, my own?"
>
> "Oh yes! I don't like him," said Dora. "Why don't he go?"
>
> "Who, my life?"
>
> "Your friend," said Dora. "It isn't any business of his. What a stupid he must be!"
>
> "My love!" (There never was anything so coaxing as her childish ways.) "He is the best creature!"
>
> "Oh, but we don't want any best creatures!" pouted Dora.
>
> "My dear," I argued, "you will soon know him well, and like him of all things. And here is my aunt coming soon: and you'll like her of all things too, when you know her."
>
> "No, please don't bring her!" said Dora, giving me a horrified little kiss, and folding her hands. "Don't. I know she's a naughty, mischief-making old thing! Don't let her come here, Doady!" which was a corruption of David.
>
> Remonstrance was of no use, then; so I laughed, and admired, and was very much in love and very happy; and she showed me Jip's new trick of standing on his hind legs in a corner—which he did for about the space of a flash of lightning, and then fell down—and I don't know how long I should have stayed there, oblivious of Traddles, if Miss Lavinia had not come in to take me away. Miss Lavinia was very fond of Dora (she told me Dora was exactly like what she had been herself at her age—she must have altered a good deal), and she treated Dora just as if she had been a toy. I wanted to persuade Dora to come and see Traddles, but on my proposing it she ran off to her own room, and locked herself in; so I went to Traddles without her, and walked away with him on air.

Why he should walk on air, after this perverse, wilful and disgusting exhibition, it is hard to see. Dora, who was, as my grandparents used to say, cute as a pet fox, spotted the potential danger in Betsey Trotwood ; and I suspect that David cheated a little in his subsequent record of all the things that Betsey said. For, once the pair are married, Betsey is made to dote upon Dora, talking of sensitive blossoms and what-not, almost as much as David. I am highly suspicious about this. I can see that Betsey, the soul of honour and probity, once the marriage was a fact, would do everything in her power to make it successful. But I don't believe that she lost her senses to the extent that David tries to make out. I expect he was just walking on air again, and forced everyone to see his beloved in the apricot-coloured light that he did.

One may be sorry for Dora, but she is not at all an amiable character. She has a hard purposiveness ; one can see exactly what sort of an old woman she would have turned into—frail, tyrannical, indestructible, binding everyone to her by her invalidism and pretence of charm. It is she who asks to be called " child-wife," a type of being which, when one contemplates it—but I prefer not to ; the abyss is too deep. " Reasoning is worse than scolding," she pouts, when begged to be reasonable. " I didn't marry to be reasoned with." On another occasion, " Then don't find fault with me," she cries, " and I will be good."

It is left for Betsey Trotwood to make the only comment : " Remember, my dear, your future is between you two. No one can assist you ; you are to work it out for yourselves. This is marriage, Trot."

It is indeed ; and Dickens could not face it. David had made a mistake, a tragic mistake ; and Dickens saves him from the consequences of it. Dora has to be got rid of. She dies, murmuring, " I was too young and foolish . . ." Her death is a refusal to face the inescapable consequences of such a marriage. It is a device to save David from disillusion. Any disillusion there is Dickens gives to Dora because, in the illumination of her death-bed, she can bear it. Any failure there has been, we are to understand, has really been hers.

After this small tragic excursion, from which happily he has taken no harm—men are pretty good at taking care of themselves in these affairs, and, when the novelist is a man, it is usually the woman who pays—after this small tragic excursion, David can be led to the faithful arms that have been waiting all the time to receive him. There is an element of danger here, too, for David has not yet come to a sense of reality ; he is not able to see a woman as she really is. There is an echo still of the earlier David. He is still self-deceived, as he always was. Do you remember that little bit of dialogue between him and Dora, where she said, " It is better to be stupid than uncomfortable, isn't it ? ", thereby epitomising for her countrywomen one of their strongest social maxims, the basis for a whole middle-class philosophy ? And do you remember David's reply, fatuous in its degree of self-deception : " Better to be naturally Dora than anything else in the world." That is what he thought he believed. What Dora was naturally, he had very little idea. David, up to the point where we take farewell of him, is still the kind of man who hangs wreath upon wreath of garlands round a woman's neck, and then kneels down and worships the flowers. " Dear Agnes ! " he cries, " What should I do without you ? You are always my good angel. I never think of you in any other light." Danger signal again ! But Agnes will be equal to it. Before she has finished, she will have compelled David to love her as a real flesh-and-blood woman. Or—uneasy thought—will she, out of self-sacrificing love of him, preserve his illusion about her,

letting him remain stupid rather than run the risk of being uncomfortable ?

Now—what are we to make of all this ? What can we deduce from it about Dickens's ideas on the relationship between men and women ? We can get something of his feelings, I think, even though they may not have been wholly conscious. Nothing gives a man away more than the fable whereby he makes objective his emotional preoccupations. There is a great deal of unconscious venom in the portrait of Dora. It is nowhere admitted ; everyone is called upon to be tender, to indulge, to admire ; but we hear the things she says, and we see the things she does. They are told realistically ; it is the attitude towards them that is unrealistic, the essential Victorian attitude of the time. I know the truth of that attitude, for I am old enough to have had it proposed to me as the ideal to be followed. My purpose now is not to poke fun at it, but merely to cite it as one of the obstacles in Dickens's way, an obstacle which he never surmounted, and behind which, in this novel at any rate, I feel that he thankfully took refuge. He took refuge because, however deeply the original, realistic, truth-telling impulse might have driven him to probe into these matters of the relationship of one sex with the other, the task would have been difficult and painful—how difficult and painful his own personal life bears witness—and it must have been a relief to him to realise that none of his readers would have been ready for, much less desired, such a probing ; but all would welcome and approve the line which in fact he took ; I mean the line of tender blossom, child-wife, good angel, worship, and so forth. This is not to say that a woman cannot be both a child and a good angel to a man. It is merely to remark that if either is the basis of the relationship, if either is stressed to the detriment of the other facts and other realities, then danger lies ahead.

* * * * *

Was it not perhaps his intuitive knowledge of this that made Dickens clear the stage so summarily at the end of the story ? May it not be that the hard-won peace of happily-ever-after with Agnes is too new, too fragile a thing to keep company with the great figures who belong to the time before it ? G. K. Chesterton pointed out that it called for a higher order of friendship to keep company with Wilkins Micawber, and go on lending him money from time to time, than to rejoice at his success in another hemisphere. Micawber belonged to the great world, the world which not even its creator, Dickens, could control. David has now been steered into harbour, a smaller, narrower harbour, where—so far, at any rate—the big breakers do not come, are not even heard : and the novelist sees that there is no room for these irrepressibles to come in. Dickens would have had to be not merely a giant, but a Titan to let them stay. Remember, Shakespeare himself had to kill off Mercutio and Falstaff. What did Falstaff himself say ? " Banish honest Jack, banish all the world." It was true, and Falstaff knew it, though at the time he was speaking in jest. So, banish Wilkins Micawber, banish Dan'l Peggotty, banish all the living uncontrollable world. Genius is greater always than its intention. It does not create, it releases ; and the powers it releases are greater than its own. Dickens's genius released Micawber. Dickens, the craftsman, bundled him out of sight, before he had made everything his own. Micawber is more than the hero of the story. We are more interested in him than in David.

Yet David *is* a character. First person narrators are traditionally colourless, but David is alive. He is a charming child, a lovable little boy—Mr. Mell's tribute of the hand laid on the head in the scene of his confrontation by Steerforth pays the most telling of compliments. Betsey Trotwood does not love lightly—and, of course, it is for David's

sake that she puts up with Dora. The Peggottys love David, and that is good enough for us. Besides, he has enough vitality and character to be silly and to make us cross with him. He is an immense advance on Nicholas Nickleby, for instance.

But—here is the point that nags at one's mind—how far is David's immature attitude to the women he meets a reflection of Dickens's own attitude? Every novelist has suffered too often from having readers hold him accountable for the opinions of his characters to fall easily into making the same mistake about the master novelist. Yet, in a very real sense, a novel reveals the man who wrote it. As I said just now, he cannot help giving some evidence of his deepest conflicts and perplexities. What then do David's feelings towards the women in his story tell us about Dickens's feelings? Need we ask to be told anything?

I think we may, but only in so far as we hope to learn from the novel itself something true about life. When he comes to the deepest things, the novelist must commit himself even though he may not know it. What then are we to make of the story of little Emily? And of Dr. Strong's marital perplexities? And of the little that David tells us about Martha, the girl who was on the streets? And about Rosa Dartle? And, of course, about Dora and Agnes? Rosa, by the way, supplies an instance of the unconscious revelation which no novelist can avoid. Her show-down with Mrs. Steerforth is a cruel scene. The comment is made in the story that it is cruel—as if the narrator were seeking to excuse himself for it. No excuse is needed, and none will avail. An incident is none the less cruel because we all agree that it is cruel. Something in Dickens had to be satisfied by humiliating Mrs. Steerforth.

In view of this, and of the fact that so many of his heroines and his good girls are sticks or fantasies, mere effigies of masculine wish fulfilment, while he is always magnificent at the female character parts I suggest that Dickens was imaginatively unable to portray in the round any woman with whom he could conceivably have had a sexual relationship. That is to say, he could not draw realistically any attractive woman at the age to which he was most susceptible at the time of writing. All such women and girls had to be rarified, dehydrated, made into masculine comforts, idealised to the correct standard of the day. Do not please mix that up with the business instinct of the novelist keeping an eye on his audience. It is something far deeper. The business consideration would merely reinforce it, rationalise it. Dickens had a real vision of evil; that is what makes his work so interesting. He was intensely aware of the shadow side of life, but he could not face imaginatively the shadow side of his relationships with women. All that part of his imaginative life had to be idealised.

At any rate, whether I am right or wrong about this, we do not get from *David Copperfield* anything to the point about marriage or the relationship of man to woman and woman to man. Nothing to the point, that is, by the standard of revelation which Dickens set himself in the first part of the book, and which, when he is at his best, is the hall-mark of his genius. This was the lack that Dostoevsky spoke of, the gap in the most tremendous equipment an English novelist has ever been able to command. It is the one great flaw in *David Copperfield*, measured in the only way it can be measured, which is by *David Copperfield's* own best standards. Lord David Cecil has insisted, writing of another great novelist, Thomas Hardy, that a work of art must be judged only by the rules which it makes for itself. Sturge Moore said the same thing before him. So *David Copperfield* is the judge of *David Copperfield*. Only by its own best standards can

we point to what is less than the best in it. A work of genius is like a beloved human being, loved for all that he or she is, head to heels, warts and all.

* * * * *

And what prodigality there is in Dickens's genius what irrepressible munificence! Any one of a dozen minor characters in this book would be enough for a lesser novelist to dine out on for months. Do you remember Mrs. Crupp, who left buckets and other impedimenta on the stairs, to the danger of all who went up and down, and who so signally failed to ingratiate herself with Betsey Trotwood?

> Here my aunt looked hard at Mrs. Crupp, and observed, "We needn't trouble you to wait, ma'am."
>
> "Shall I put a little more tea in the pot afore I go, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp.
>
> "No, I thank you, ma'am," replied my aunt.
>
> "Would you let me fetch another pat of butter, ma'am?" said Mrs. Crupp. "Or would you be persuaded to try a new-laid hegg? or should I brile a rasher? Ain't there nothing I could do for your dear aunt, Mr. Copperfull?"
>
> "Nothing, ma'am," returned my aunt. "I shall do very well, I thank you."
>
> Mrs. Crupp, who had been incessantly smiling to express sweet temper, and incessantly holding her head on one side, to express a general feebleness of constitution, and incessantly rubbing her hands, to express a desire to be of service to all deserving objects, gradually smiled herself, one-sided herself, and rubbed herself, out of the room.
>
> "Dick!" said my aunt. "You know what I told you about time-servers and wealth-worshippers?"
>
> Mr. Dick—with rather a scared look, as if he had forgotten it—returned a hasty answer in the affirmative.
>
> "Mrs. Crupp is one of them," said my aunt. "Barkis, I'll trouble you to look after the tea, and let me have another cup, for I don't fancy that woman's pouring out!"

May I recall to you, too, the manner in which Betsey finally established her complete ascendancy over Mrs. Crupp?

> . . . My aunt had obtained a signal victory over Mrs. Crupp, by paying her off, throwing the first pitcher she planted on the stairs out of window, and protecting in person, up and down the staircase, a supernumerary whom she engaged from the outer world. These vigorous measures struck such terror to the breast of Mrs. Crupp, that she subsided into her own kitchen, under the impression that my aunt was mad. My aunt being supremely indifferent to Mrs. Crupp's opinion and everybody else's, and rather favouring than discouraging the idea, Mrs. Crupp, of late the bold, became within a few days so faint-hearted, that rather than encounter my aunt upon the staircase, she would endeavour to hide her portly form behind doors—leaving visible, however, a wide margin of flannel petticoat—or would shrink into dark corners. This gave my aunt such unspeakable satisfaction, that I believe she took a delight in prowling up and down, with her bonnet insanely perched on the top of her head, at times when Mrs. Crupp was likely to be in the way.

And this is a mere irrelevancy, thrown in carelessly; Mrs. Crupp has a walking-on part in a book that contains Mr. Dick, Betsey Trotwood, Traddles with his skeletons, Uriah Heep, and Wilkins Micawber. Genius touches the rock with its wand, and out gush the waters of life, uncontrollable, even by genius. We see now what Arnold Bennett meant when he said that the greatest novelists have no technique. They have, thank heaven, no technique for suppressing the life which springs from the dry rock at their touch. It will not be dammed up. The best they can do is—so to speak—to send it to Australia.

Dickens touched the rock many times, and out came the waters of life abundant: sometimes, it would seem, of life eternal.

DICKENS CLASHES WITH HIS PUBLISHER

By Edgar Johnson

Adapted from a forthcoming Biography
CHARLES DICKENS: HIS TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH

(*Continued from page* 17)

II

[This article is largely based upon unpublished letters, documents, and contracts, which have until recently been in private hands. Permission to quote them is gratefully acknowledged to the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. Grateful acknowledgment is also made to the Pierpont Morgan Library for the use of unpublished material in its collection.]

AFTER the storms of the previous year, Bentley endeavoured to be conciliatory. He and Dickens dined together again. "Bentley was here yesterday," Dickens wrote Forster in October, 1837. "He at once gave in about Barnaby Rudge, and said I could direct Molloy to alter the agreement as I liked to meet the object in view."*

Bentley had acquired a life of the famous clown Grimaldi, long-windedly and clumsily arranged by Thomas Egerton Wilks from autobiographical notes.† He proposed that Dickens revise it. Dickens stipulated that his name should appear only as editor, not as author, and demanded a minimum of £300 and a half share of the profits after deduction of expenses, to which Bentley agreed.‡ Dickens did no original writing, except for an introductory and possibly a concluding chapter. His revisions, mostly drastic abridgment, he dictated to his father, who vastly enjoyed his exalted office as amanuensis. The book's reception surprised Dickens, who thought little of it. "Seventeen hundred Grimaldis have been already sold," he wrote Forster during the first week of publication, "and the demand increases daily ! ! !

them to make them fit into the space left after he and Bentley had worked out the rest of the magazine, it is difficult to acquit Bentley of tactlessness at the best, or avoid suspecting that, still rankling over their previous differences, he was relieving his feelings by seizing upon a technicality. But it was not a safe, even though legal, liberty to take with Dickens. If Bentley really desired friendly relations, he might better have forgotten these cheese-paring economies—they totalled some sixteen guineas—instead of risking a good will that might have brought him profits in thousands. For Dickens reacted to these annoyances as if stung. Did Bentley think it liberal, he asked, "to your editor and principal contributor to deduct his half pages and count him down by the line"? Did he not think "the pains and care bestowed upon the tale of which you count the words" deserved a better return? Did he "consider that such treatment (so different from any I have received elsewhere) is likely to make me wish for a very long continuance of our business connection?"*

However their relations staggered on through 1838. But as Dickens tried to finish *Oliver Twist* sufficiently in advance of its completion in the *Miscellany* to have it at the book-printer's that winter, he realised that it would be impossible to have *Barnaby Rudge* written by November, as he had agreed. Nothing of merit or popular appeal could be turned out so hastily. He consequently suggested to Bentley another change in their agreement. Would it not be more to Bentley's interest, as well as within the scope of Dickens's ability, if *Barnaby Rudge* succeeded *Oliver* in the *Miscellany* and were published afterwards in three volumes, instead of his undertaking, at the conclusion of *Oliver* in the magazine, a new series for it while at the same time writing *Barnaby* for separate book publication. The production of a large instalment of three different works (for Dickens was already starting *Nicholas Nickleby* for Chapman and Hall) every month would have been, he felt, beyond Scott himself. This way, he "could do the best for you as well as for myself" and the *Miscellany* would suffer, he assured Bentley, no gap in his contributions.†

But Bentley did not at all agree. He insisted on keeping *Barnaby Rudge* and Dickens's contributions to the *Miscellany* two separate matters, which Dickens repeated it was impossible for him to accomplish. If it was unrealistic for Dickens to have undertaken them in the first place, he was still a newcomer to his profession. To have allowed him to undertake them was no less unrealistic of Bentley, who was a publisher of long standing. Dickens can hardly be cleared, however, of recklessness and, even, of disingenuousness in undertaking still another work for Chapman and Hall less than a fortnight after he assured Bentley that it was impossible for him to perform what he was already committed to. Although he never turned out the comic book, *Don's Annual Register and Obituary of Blue Devils*, which he then agreed to have ready for Christmas, Bentley would hardly have felt more faith in Dickens's arguments if he had known about the matter.

The wrangle over *Barnaby Rudge* spread itself out over the next six months, while the writing of *Oliver Twist* was drawing to a close and the shining sun of *Nicholas Nickleby* was rising upon the world. In July, Bentley visited Dickens at Twickenham overnight‡ to try to iron out their difficulties. At last, after conferences with Bentley's advisers, it was agreed that the sum for *Barnaby* be increased to £800, and Dickens's main demand that it be published in the *Miscellany*, instead of a separate series, was conceded.§

* Unpublished letter, C.D. to R. Bentley, "Thursday morning."
† Nonesuch Letters, I, 159, C.D. to R. Bentley, February 11th, 1838.
‡ Nonesuch Letters, I, 148, Diary, July 12th, 1838.
§ Agreement of September 22nd, 1838, drafted by Smithson, Dunn, & Mitton and signed by C.D.

But in January their uneasy peace broke down again. Dickens was still exasperated by editorial interferences : articles he accepted never appeared in the *Miscellany*, others were long delayed. And he found Bentley's premature notices of the appearance of *Barnaby* irritating. As far back as November, Forster had asked Bentley, " Is it exactly prudent to use the expression ' forthwith ' respecting the appearance of Barnaby in the Miscellany ? "*

Indeed Forster found it very difficult to keep Dickens from throwing over the agreement altogether. Dickens felt harassed by the constant frictions with Bentley, and the task ahead of him of writing *Barnaby* now seemed so great that it might crush him. In a bitter outburst to Forster he complained of the difference in Bentley's and his own profits from the sale of *Oliver Twist* and that this new work was " on the same journeyman-terms." He could not work under such tyrannical conditions, he needed " time to breathe," he could not touch the story till he had been refreshed by the summer holidays. In fact, he was determined to put it off for six months and was enclosing a letter to Bentley to that effect. It was only because of Forster, he concluded, that he did not put it off forever, for he felt himself " completely released from such hard bargains." His only impulse was to escape the net wound about him, but he was resisting it and merely asking for a six months' postponement.†

An eloquent and heartfelt utterance, certainly. But the facts are coloured by personal emotion. For Bentley had neither entangled Dickens in a net nor forced him into slavery. It was Dickens's terms that had been agreed to from the beginning, and Bentley had repeatedly modified them in Dickens's favour. In addition to the pieces for the *Miscellany*, two novels had been contracted for ; they were now become simply the contributions to the magazine and were being paid for, besides, at a considerably higher price. For Dickens's name as editor, if not his services, Bentley was also giving, depending on the circulation, probably double the sum originally agreed upon.

Bentley, however, was indubitably profiting to an enormously greater degree than Dickens. And he resisted every concession until it was wrung from him by the realisation that these golden fruits might vanish. Chapman and Hall had also gained more from *Pickwick* than Dickens had, but it is significant that he did not resent them as he did Bentley. Later, it is true, Dickens left them, but with no such acrimonious and protracted quarrel. Nor was Dickens the only person with whom Bentley had troubles. There were difficulties over the publication of a novel by Mary Russell Mitford. From Forster Bentley demanded repayment of a £150 advance on a cancelled book agreement, although he himself had wanted to restore it. He quarrelled with Ainsworth and with Cruikshank. He tried to pare down the sums he paid his old college friend Richard Barham, who promptly obtained twice as much from Bentley's rival, Colburn.‡

It is certainly clear that if Dickens was a man of growing determination, Bentley bristled with difficult traits. And, although it is true that Dickens was unscrupulous in pressing his artist's advantage of declaring a kind of literary sit-down strike if Bentley insisted on what was nominated in the bond, the revisions Dickens demanded represented a commonsense view of fairness even if they were not embodied in contractual law. Much of their trouble lay in the absolute sale of a copyright for a lump sum, a practice common at the time. This procedure might work for an established author of stable position, but it would naturally be unsatisfactory to an author like Dickens whose

* Unpublished letter, Forster to R. Bentley, November 8th, 1838.
† Nonesuch Letters, I, 196, C.D. to Forster, January 21st, 1839.
‡ Unpublished letters to R. Bentley from George Mitford, Forster, and Barham, and from Barham to Hume.

popularity constantly outstripped every attempted readjustment. Had there been anything like the contemporary sliding scale of royalties, the conflict between them might partly have been avoided.

Not entirely, however, for a certain residue of their hostility was ultimately temperamental. Despite all his surface *bonhomie* and cordiality, Bentley had strong authoritarian impulses. The enterprise that he owned, he intended to manage. He must have a finger in every part of the direction: the acceptance, rejection, and commissioning of manuscripts, their rate of remuneration, the contents of each issue. As a successful publisher he considered his literary judgment better than that of the editor he had put in what he evidently regarded as nominal, but Dickens insisted must be real, charge of the *Miscellany*. Dickens, too, was proud and determined to have his own will. In the end, Bentley's every way of doing things rasped him: the small deductions for half-page shortages, the delays in running pieces long accepted, the petty assertions of his rights that Bentley could not resist making in the very act of yielding a point.

In his reply to Dickens's demand for a delay in *Barnaby Rudge*, Bentley underlined his own flexibility by professing himself "desirous . . . at all times to meet your wishes even at the expense of my own convenience." Although he could find no clause in their agreement which entitled Dickens, and he now quoted Dickens's own words, "'to require a postponement of six months,'" he would raise no objection to Dickens's "wish." Only *he* required that Dickens undertake to suspend all work except *Nicholas Nickleby*, and not undertake "to write any work or any portion of a work of any description during that period."*

But this Dickens could not promise. The widow of his old publisher, Macrone, had been left in poverty, and Dickens had agreed to edit a benefit volume for her to be published by Colburn. He had not yet given up, although he had done no work on, the comic book he was to have had for Chapman and Hall for Christmas. Bentley's response assuredly was very embarrassing to an author demanding a six months' vacation during which he washed his hands "of any fresh accumulation of labour."

Dickens's climatic explosion of anger was swift. Within two days he repudiated any further connection with the *Miscellany*. In vain Bentley now tried to shake this determination. He even offered to acquiesce in Dickens's writing the comic annual, of which he had learned by now, if he remained nominal Editor of the *Miscellany* and agreed not to conduct any other periodical. For this mere use of his name he offered £40 a month.* But Dickens was adamant, and advanced the counter-suggestion that his friend Harrison Ainsworth become the Editor. Then, and only then, he would express himself, although still withdrawing, as friendly toward the magazine.‡

Bentley was furious but desperate. He was bitter over what he termed Dickens's dishonourable conduct, and resisted having Ainsworth forced upon him.§ Dickens refused to budge. Bentley asked Barham to confer with Dickens and Ainsworth, and Barham told him frankly that Ainsworth would make a very eligible choice for the editorship. He submitted to Bentley a memorandum of Dickens's proposals, which he felt "fair and reasonable." Dickens would write a paper for the next number of the *Miscellany* pleasantly announcing his resignation and expressing his friendship for the new editor. He would write gratuitously two further papers within the next six months. He would

* Unpublished letter, R. Bentley to C.D., January 25th, 1839.
† Unpublished draft in Gregory's hand marked "copied 28/1/39."
‡ Unpublished memo. from Barham to Bentley, no date.
§ Unpublished holograph note in R. Bentley's hand.

give Ainsworth *personally* any information that might help him in conducting the magazine, and would regard it as a point of honour not to edit, conduct, originate, or write for any other magazine whatever until the end of 1839.*

Reluctantly Bentley agreed. He realised how little possibility there was of getting what he wanted by a chancery suit; at enormous expense he might ruin Dickens but still be as far as ever from furthering his own ends. Nor would this aid the *Miscellany* or enhance his standing with other authors. They had only to settle the disposition of *Barnaby Rudge*, on which Bentley still had claims not surrendered with Dickens's departure from the magazine.

After several tentative draft agreements, the final one provided that *Barnaby Rudge* was to be delivered to Bentley on January 1st, 1840, for publication in three volumes, an extension three months longer than Dickens had originally demanded. He was to undertake until then no other work except *Nicholas Nickleby*, the comic annual for Chapman and Hall, and the benefit book for Mrs. Macrone. For *Barnaby Rudge*, Bentley agreed to pay £2,000 outright, another £1,000 if the sale exceeded 10,000; and still another £1,000 if the sale reached 15,000: a possible total of £4,000 for the entire copyright of the book for which, two years before, he was to have paid only £500.*

It was a bitter pill for Bentley to swallow. Dickens was triumphant at having "burst the Bentleian bonds."‡ In the February, 1839, *Miscellany* he withdrew in a "Familiar Epistle from a Parent to a Child, Aged Two Years and Two Months." The infant for whom he had cared since birth, he said, he handed over to his good friend Mr. Ainsworth with his best wishes and without gain or profit to himself, for it had "always been literally 'Bentley's' Miscellany, and never mine."†

But nine months later, when the delivery date for *Barnaby Rudge* was drawing near, Dickens had only two chapters written.‖ He had not even begun it until *Nicholas Nickleby* had ended in October, and had then been interrupted by house-hunting, and the distractions of moving from Doughty Street to his magnificent new home in Devonshire Terrace. He was finding it hard going, for all his disciplined powers of concentration, and his long delay in starting reinforces the suspicion that, by now, he did not *feel* like writing *Barnaby* and was labouring against the grain.¶ For, although he complained of the strain of writing *Nicholas Nickleby*, it had not taken all his time. He had dropped the comic annual, but had written instead an anonymous potboiler which Chapman and Hall published in January under the title of *Sketches of Young Couples*. For this he received only £200 and there can be no doubt that *Barnaby Rudge* would have brought in the full £4000, agreed to by Bentley. (*Nicholas Nickleby* was at that time selling around 50,000 copies a month.) Mercenary reasons were not the cause of his delay, nor does it seem possible that Dickens, for all his prodigious energy, could have expected to finish a three-volume novel in three months.

The book's stormy history may well have built up within him an insuperable internal resistance to it. He had had trouble about it with

* Unpublished letter, Barham to R. Bentley, January 30th (1839).
† Undated draft agreement, but later than February 18th, 1839; two other drafts same as that dated February 27th, 1839, and marked February 15th and February 22nd; an unsigned agreement about *O.T.* and *B.R.* superseding that of January 29th, 1839, and that of September 22nd, 1838.
‡ Nonesuch Letters, I, 198, C.D. to Talfourd.
§ Notice in Bentley's *Miscellany*.
‖ Nonesuch Letters, I, 263, C.D. to Chapman and Hall, July 2nd, 1840.
¶ Nonesuch Letters, I, 231, C.D. to Cruikshank, October 3rd, 1839; I, 233, to Forster (October-November).

Macrone, before its title was changed from *Gabriel Vardon, the Locksmith of London*. It had been a bone of contention through all the bitter hostilities marking his two years on the *Miscellany*. Deep within him, he wished to be free of Bentley altogether. Whether or not he consciously put it off in the Micawberlike hope of something turning up that would justify his refusing to finish it, he certainly now pounced upon two excuses he conceived Bentley's conduct to give him.

First, he resented Bentley's improper use of his name. "Mr. Bentley in his advertisements and hired puffs of other books with which I never had . . . any possible connection," Dickens wrote his attorneys, "has repeatedly used my name and the names of some of my writing in an unwarrantable manner . . . calculated to do me serious prejudice." Second, he disapproved of what he termed Bentley's practice of bringing out a three-volume novel for twenty-five shillings and then, while the booksellers' shelves still groaned with unsold copies, republishing it in fifteen weekly parts for a shilling each.*

These accusations Bentley's son and successor characterised after Dickens's death as false.† Their truth and importance, however, are matters of interpretation. As the publisher of *Oliver Twist*, Bentley was justified in "puffing" that book. Dickens neither claims Bentley represented him as the author of books he did not write, nor states how the use of his name or his books damaged him. As for the cheaper editions, if true save as an unusual accident, Bentley would be a curiously incompetent man of business wilfully destroying his own sales or, even if the immediate losses were not his, endangering future sales. On the other hand, Dickens was not only extraordinarily truthful, he was also too clever a controversialist to risk a statement demonstrably untrue. But he may here have seized upon a few exceptional occurrences to support his contentions. There was no use, he insisted, in Bentley's advertising that the book was "preparing for publication." He was working on something else, and the manuscript would not be ready on January 1st. This, he concluded, the agreement distinctly provided for by giving Bentley the right under those circumstances to cancel it.

But Bentley, of course, had no such desire. Gregory reminded Dickens's attorneys that Bentley had already granted several postponements, that this one would be "provably of pecuniary loss"; what compensation did Dickens propose?‡ Meanwhile Bentley went on advertising *Barnaby Rudge*, and Dickens announced a new publication by Chapman and Hall. Gregory noted that, whereas Dickens's solicitors had merely said the manuscript would not be ready on time, Dickens had now declared a positive determination to violate the agreement.§

Mitton called on Gregory to say that if Bentley's advertisements continued, Dickens would advertise denials. Did he or did he not, Gregory demanded, intend to write the book he had agreed to write? Mitton was unprepared to answer, and Gregory wished him good morning.‖ It was, Dickens exclaimed in fierce exultation, "War to the knife with the Burlington Street Brigand."¶

For another week all was quiet. "The Brigand is sleeping," Dickens wrote Edward Chapman, "but I suspect with one eye open."** His friend William Charles Macready, the actor, offered his own services for mediation. "So much disgust and suffering," he wrote, "must

* Unpublished letter, C.D. to Smithson and Mitton, December 16th, 1839.
† George Bentley notation on letter quoted.
‡ Unpublished copy of a letter from Gregory to Smithson and Mitton, December 17th, 1839, made for Bentley.
§ Another copy of a letter to Smithson and Mitton, December 19th, 1839.
‖ Unpublished memorandum from Gregory to Bentley.
¶ Nonesuch Letters, I, 237, C.D. to Beard, December 17th, 1839.
** Nonesuch Letters, I, 238, C.D. to Chapman, December 27th, 1839.

interfere with you seriously in every way."* But in the privacy of his Diary, Macready considered Dickens quite wrong. "He makes a contract which he considers advantageous at the time, but subsequently finding his talents more lucrative than he had supposed, he refuses to fulfil the contract."†

Dickens, however, was no less convinced that he was entirely right, and refused Macready's offer with grateful thanks. "I am exceedingly anxious that you should understand that I do not reject your good offices from any obstinate or wrong-headed feeling, but simply because I *know* the hopelessness of any mediation just now, and know this man as well as anybody living. The law, bad as it is, is more true and more to be trusted than such a hound as he, and *unless* he gives me the opening for a negociation, I must . . . submit to its vexations with what philosophy I can. If I were a builder or a stone mason I might fulfil my contract with him, but write for him I really cannot unless I am forced and have no outlet for escape."‡

The hysterical sincerity of this letter reveals that what Dickens felt now was an almost obsessional hatred of Bentley. "The advertisement was repeated today in the Times and Herald and the dog's solicitors (God forgive me for libelling his good animals) doggedly inform us that they mean to repeat it. The contradiction, therefore . . . appears in the . . . papers tomorrow . . . . This done, he means . . . to advertise the agreements—and that done, I don't know what happens."§

Bentley prepared to carry the battle into the pages of the *Miscellany* in an account of the dispute that would outline the "one-sided agreement" Dickens complained about. The result, his friend Barham was sure, would be slaughterous: "Only *be still* for a moment," he wrote Bentley persuasively, "& your reply may be a *smasher* ' . . ." ‖ Meanwhile Dickens was threatened with a chancery suit and belligerently retorted that no court in England should compel him to write the novel.¶

Slowly, from this high moment of defiance, the dispute simmered down to its final settlement. Bentley was advised by expert legal counsel that he could not obtain an injunction restraining Dickens from the publication of any new work until the delivery of *Barnaby*. His only recourse would be to a Court of Law for damages.**

A protracted series of negotiations took place, Forster representing Dickens's interests, and the Editor of the *Literary Gazette*, William Jerdan, who felt friendly to both parties, representing Bentley. Ultimately they arranged a settlement that both antagonists accepted. Dickens was to pay Bentley £1,500 for the assignment to him by Bentley of his interest in *Oliver Twist* and the relinquishment of all further claims upon Dickens's writings, either produced or promised. In addition, Dickens also purchased the Cruikshank plates for *Oliver Twist* and the copies of that novel remaining in stock for £750.†† Chapman and Hall agreed to finance Dickens and to deduct the sum from £3,000 they would pay him for a six-months' copyright of *Barnaby Rudge*.‡‡ Thus Dickens concentrated the publication of all his books in one firm, his "trusty friends" Chapman and Hall, whom he pro-

* Unpublished letter in Morgan Library, Macready to C.D., "York Gate, Saturday."
† Macready *Diary*, February 23rd, 1840.
‡ Unpublished letter in Morgan Library, C.D. to Macready, "Sunday Morning."
§ Unpublished letter in Morgan Library, C.D. to Macready (January 24th, 1840 ? or February 24th, 1840 ?).
‖ Unpublished letter, Barham to Bentley, "Monday night."
¶ R. Bentley, unpublished holograph memorandum.
** Opinion by Sutton Sharpe, dated February 12th, 1840.
†† Unpublished letter, Jerdan to Bentley, June 19th, 1840, Jerdan's *Autobiography*, IV, 209.
‡‡ Nonesuch Letters, I, 213, C.D. to Chapman and Hall, July 2nd, 1840.

claimed "the best of booksellers, past, present, and to come."* It was a daring prediction, but at last Dickens was happy and satisfied.

With Bentley, who thereby lost the most remunerative author of his time, it is impossible not to sympathise. For he had had the law on his side at every stage of their contention. Against his clear claims was only Dickens's burning sense of injustice and ruthless determination not to yield, even to the law. It was Bentley's misfortune that his legal remedies were so expensive and uncertain that they were feeble weapons, although from every legal point of view he was in the right and Dickens entirely in the wrong.

The imponderables, however, are more difficult to assess. For if Dickens had no case, he did have a grievance. It was genuinely unjust that the talent which had achieved so tremendous a popularity should have profited so much less than the hands which distributed its work. The heart of their breach, however, was a clash of radically opposed temperaments—even from the very first disputes over Dickens's attempt to have *Oliver Twist* fulfil two commitments, to the same struggles over *Barnaby Rudge*, and his postponement and final wrenching of it free of Bentley's grasp. Although Bentley spoke of his desire to be generous, he disputed every guinea. And every concession—he did make six of them !—was extorted from a reluctance that resisted long enough to destroy any grace in its final yielding and that was certainly not dissipated by his subsequent petty economies on the enormously successful *Miscellany* and his wrangles about editorial authority. Dickens expressed gratification at some of their earlier readjustments, but he found, in the end, that he got only what he fought for.

From their two-year duel Dickens emerged not only completely victorious but with a will forged into a weapon of steel, his sense of power immeasurably sharpened, his tenacity immovably strengthened. Strong from the days of his delicate and unhappy boyhood his will had always been, but it had operated with a certain diffidence and almost as an invisible force in his struggles to surmount obstacles. His imperiousness and his indignation had flared on only a few previous occasions when he had become convinced that he was being ill-treated. Never before had it tempered itself to the rigours of a prolonged conflict with an individual foe. Always clever in shaping the facts of a dispute to his advantage, he became a brilliant controversialist, high-lighting every weakness in the position of his adversary with biting sarcasm. And never, from the time of his struggle with Bentley, did Dickens surrender in the smallest point to any antagonist. Even in repose the set of his features and the high carriage of his head often conveyed an impression of spirited defiance. And once opposed, whether by adverse literary critics, his publishers, his friends, members of his family, or the entire American press, he hardened into a relentless determination that was to sweep fatefully through all the sorrows and successes of his life.

* Inscription by C.D. to Chapman, October 14th, 1839, reproduced in Waugh's *A Hundred Years of Publishing*, facing p. 44.

THOMAS STURGE COTTERELL

As we go to press we deeply regret to learn of the death of Mr. T. Sturge Cotterell, M.B.E., founder and Life President of the Bath Branch. A tribute to his memory will appear in our next number.

PICTURES FROM GENOA

By Leslie C. Staples

"THIS book," wrote Dickens, of his *Pictures from Italy*, "is a series of faint reflections—mere shadows in the water—of places to which the imagination of most people are attracted in a greater or less degree."

These notes, written rather more than a hundred years after Dickens's sojourn in Italy, will prove, I hope, at least "faint reflections" of his twelvemonth in Genoa. Fairly familiar with that beautiful and interesting country by means of half a dozen visits between the two Great Wars, I determined after an interval of ten years to go again to see for myself what effect those tragic years had had upon this romantic land.

The Pink Jail

I got out some maps in order to indulge in that most delightful of pursuits — planning a tour. The first city that caught my eye was Genoa and it occurred to me that I had never stayed there. I could recollect little that had been written about the houses in which Dickens lived, so familiar to us in his little travel book and in his letters. I remembered the delight of exploring Dickensian Lausanne three years before (see *The Dickensian*, 1947, p. 4) and my mind was made up. A few weeks later I was rolling across France in a *wagon-lit*, thinking that the journey that I was performing in the course of twenty-four hours took Dickens many days in his great lumbering berline just over a hundred years ago. He had to traverse laboriously the roads of France from North to South and then take ship, berline and all, to Genoa. I was whisked Westwards and under the Alps over which he had slowly to climb on his return. I could not help thinking of his journey with his children, for I shared a sleeping compartment with an excited wide-eyed traveller of tender years, all eagerness to see the great world, as formerly were Dickens's children. I took it to be an excellent omen that my very youthful companion was bound for another of my own literary objectives, Asolo, for later I was to make a pilgrimage to that Italian alpine village beloved of Robert Browning and of Eleonora Duse. But that is another story.

I had written to the British Consul in Genoa, seeking assistance in identifying the two houses in which Dickens lived in 1844 and 1845, which was swiftly and courteously granted: the Commune of the city had been approached and I was not only provided with the exact addresses of the houses, but, to escort me to them, was promised a guide who would be armed with the permission of the respective owners for me to visit the interiors. The owner of the Villa Bagnerello, Signor Petracchi, was, however, so interested in my visit that the guide

was unnecessary. He insisted on meeting me and rendering constant practical assistance throughout my stay, and to him I owe a delightful and effortless pilgrimage : the effortlessness was indeed a boon for the weather was intensely and abnormally hot for the season.

Dickens arrived at Genoa in the summer of 1844 and took up residence in a house at Albaro, just outside the city, arranged for him by Angus Fletcher. On August 3rd he wrote to Forster, enclosing a sketch of the house. This drawing is familiar to us by reason of its subsequent appearance in Forster's *Life of Dickens* and is carefully explained by Dickens in his letter:

The Courtyard of The Pink Jail.

" You are standing, sir, in our vineyard, among the grapes and figs. The Mediterranean is at your back as you look at the house : of which two sides, out of four, are here depicted. The lower story (nearly concealed by the vines) consists of the hall, a wine-cellar, and some store-rooms. The three windows on the left of the first floor belong to the sala, lofty and white-washed, which has two more windows round the corner. The fourth window *did* belong to the dining-room, but I have changed one of the nurseries for better air ; and it now appertains to that branch of the establishment. The fifth and sixth, or two right-hand windows, sir, admit the light to the inimitable's (and uxor's) chamber ; to which the first window round the right-hand corner, which you perceive in shadow, also belongs. The next window in shadow, young sir, is the bower of Miss H. (Hogarth). The next, a nursery window ; the same having two more round the corner again. The bowery-looking place stretching out upon the left of the house is the terrace, which opens out from a French window in the drawing-room on the same floor of which you see nothing and forms one side the of courtyard. The upper windows belong to some of those uncounted chambers upstairs ; the fourth one, longer than the rest, being Fletcher's bedroom. There is a kitchen or two up there besides, and my dressing-room ; which you can't see from this point of view. The kitchens and other offices in use are down below, under that part of the house where the roof is longest. On your left, beyond the bay of Genoa, about two miles off, the Alps stretch out into the far horizon ; on your right, at three or four miles distance, are mountains covered with forts . . . You go through the court-yard, and out at the gate, and down a narrow lane to the sea . . . You will observe that we make no pretension to architectural magnificence, but that we have abundance of room. And here I am, beholding only vines and the sea for days together . . . Good Heavens How I wish you'd come for a week or two and taste the white wine at a penny farthing the pint. It is excellent . . . "

A comparison of Fletcher's sketch with my photograph will shew how little the house has changed in a hundred years.

The Villa Bagnerello, facetiously termed the Pink Jail by Dickens, standing on high ground, still commands views of the sea from its upper windows, but although its immediate surroundings are

unchanged, the neighbourhood has been considerably altered since Dickens's day. A modern arterial road, with busy tramways, cuts through the former estate, and blocks of modern buildings have arisen between the new road and the sea. A hundred years ago Albaro was outside the walls of the city of Genoa, but both walls and gates have gone and it is now an inner suburb, quickly reached from the centre. Once one has left the roadway, however, there is nothing which would be unfamiliar to Dickens were he to tread that narrow way again. One walks up between the old high walls, so close together that, you will remember, the width of the berline had to be measured for fear it would get wedged between them. Suddenly we come to the gatehouse of the villa, set in an angle of the wall. It is now known as the Villa Barbarino, Via San Nazaro, 36. Above the gateway is a tablet. It records :

> In questa villa dal prisco rosso delle sue mura
> Pink Jail
> ebbe gradita dimora Carlo Dickens profondo e
> geniale rivelatore del sentimento moderno
> 1844 1894

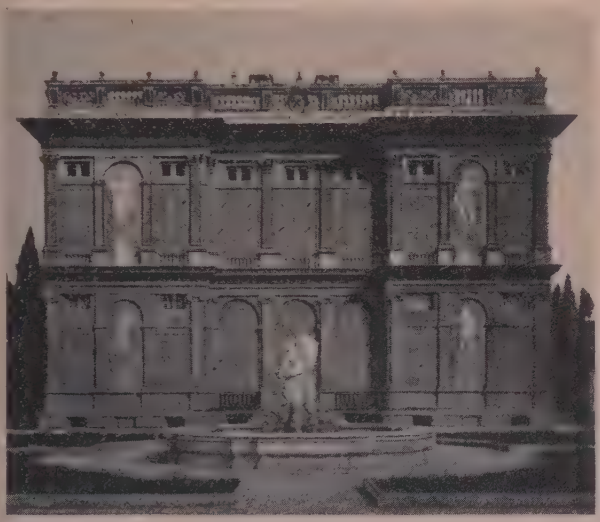
The gate is no longer rusty nor the knocker swinging on its hinge, according to Dickens's humorous description. Indeed, admission to the delightful courtyard creates the impression that the villa is in a much better condition than it was in the novelist's day. On one's left is the villa, whose pinkness has mellowed to orange, and behind one the gateway and its buildings with an attractive external staircase. On the right is the old wall of the lane and facing is the garden the most prominent feature of which, from this standpoint, is a seat beneath a tree traditionally said to have been a favourite spot with Dickens. Beyond the garden is the vineyard, sloping down towards the sea, with the coach-house from which Dickens said he expected to see his berline borne away by the giant fleas which inhabited it. To-day it is the home of some peasants.

Signor Petracchi, a highly efficient guide who knows well his *Pictures from Italy*, now led me into the house. Its size is astonishing, there being something like forty rooms now divided into three very commodious flats, one of which is occupied by Signor Petracchi and his family. Signora Petracchi inherited the house from her grandfather who purchased it from Bagnerello himself, the butcher of whom Dickens wrote. First one enters the "square hall—like a cellar," still an apt description, and mounts the marble stairs. The Petracchi apartment lies on one side of the spacious first-floor vestibule. On the other lies a second which includes the vaulted and frescoed sala which Dickens described, a very handsome room. The two commodious suites consist of finely proportioned rooms, now so well appointed and comfortable that I found it difficult to realise the cause of Dickens's initial disappointment with the house. Clearly the Pink Jail has been well cared for since his stay. In the matter of space, the house he had left at Devonshire Terrace and two others like it could be got inside it with perfect ease. The second floor is occupied by a third flat from which one mounts to a little railed platform erected since Dickens's day on the peak of the roof, which commands the wide view of the Bay of Genoa which so impressed him. Then we came down into the vineyard and turning our backs to the sea, got that view of the house described in the passage of Dickens's letter already quoted.

The immediate neighbourhood, provided that one keeps away from that very modern arterial road, has changed very little in the last hundred years. One may climb the narrow lane for a little way and come to the Palazzo Brignole of whose deserted and dilapidated

splendours Dickens gives us such a striking description. Here lived the indignant Tom cat which had to wait until his indignation and his erect tail subsided together before he could enter the hole which was his particular apartment. The Palazzo is no longer deserted ; it is now the Instituto Luigi Guanella and serves as a home for the aged and a multitude of well-cared-for children.

The ruined chapel on the shore, in the shade of which Dickens beguiled many sunny hours, has been swept away, but only a few minutes walk is the highly picturesque little harbour of Boccadasse which Dickens must have known, for every building is much older than a mere hundred years and there are few signs of recent alterations. Here one can take the most delicious meals, consisting of every known and unknown variety of fish, and at the same time look out across the harbour and its small craft to the blue Mediterranean. It must all have been quite idyllic in the forties of the last century ; it is well worth going a long way to see now. But Dickens was not content with his quarters and after rather more than two months he moved, at the end of September, into the city to what was then known as the Palazzo Peschiere, which was to be his home until he left Italy in the following June. Of this he sent an elaborate description to Forster on October 6th :



Palazzo Peschiere.

" . . . In the centre of the grand sala, fifty feet high, of an area larger than the dining-room of the Academy, and painted walls and ceiling, with frescoes three hundred years old, as fresh as if the colours had been laid on yesterday. On the same floor as this great hall are a drawing-room, and a dining-room, into which we might put your large room—I wish we could !—away in one corner, and dine without knowing it, both covered also with frescoes still bright enough to make them thoroughly cheerful, and both so nicely proportioned as to give to their bigness all effect of snugness . . . Adjoining the sala, right and left, are the two best bed-rooms ; in size and shape like those of Windsor Castle but greatly higher ; both having altars, a range of three windows with stone balconies, floors tesselated in patterns of black and white stone, and walls painted every inch ; on the left, nymphs pursued by satyrs as large as life and as wicked ; on the right, Phaeton larger than life, with horses bigger than Meux and Co.'s, tumbling headlong into the best bed . . . Beyond the town is the wide expanse of the Mediterranean, as blue, at this moment, as the most pure and vivid prussian blue on Mac's palette when it is newly set ; and on the horizon there is a red flush, seen nowhere as it is here. Immediately below the windows are the gardens of the house, with gold-fish

swimming and diving in the fountains . . . Did I tell you how many fountains we have here ? No matter. If they played nectar, they wouldn't please me half so well as the West Middlesex water-works at Devonshire-terrace . . . "

My astonishment at the size of the Pink Jail was nothing to my amazement on visiting the Palazzo Peschiere. It is truly a palace and on a magnificent scale. Known now as the Villa Pallavicini, it was built in the seventeenth century for the family of that name, to whom it still belongs, and the garden floor serves as the residence of the Marchesa Serra, whose son is the present head of the Pallavicini family. Occupying a commanding position on the higher part of the city, in the Via San Bartolomeo (No. 5), its gardens provide fine views, although now many modern buildings dominate the scene and give the city a very different aspect from that which was familiar to Dickens. But the villa is still surrounded by its gardens ; that on the principal front still has its ornamental pond stocked with gold-fish from which was derived the name the house bore in Dickens's time. It can be seen here in the photograph. Signor Petracchi and myself were received by the Marchesa, shown over the palace and regaled with perfect English tea : nectar fit for gods in the excessive heat. We were also privileged to see the apartments on the first floor, by the courtesy of Conte Guazzone who was not in residence. On this floor is the magnificent sala which Dickens described for Forster's benefit. It would serve for the ballroom of an empress as can be seen by the corner of it I was permitted to photograph. This was the residence chosen by Dickens for his long Italian sojourn, the chief purpose of which was to avoid the expense of the homely little house in Devonshire Terrace! It was also odd to think of all this magnificence as the birthplace of Trotty Veck and Meg, for here was written *The Chimes*.

The Sala of the Palazzo Peschiere.

Down into the city again, it is as easy to-day to be as impressed as was Dickens with the narrow street of palaces he knew as Via Nuova. Now it is called Via Garibaldi. Prominent among these great patrician residences are two, which belonged to the Brignole family, popularly known as the Palazzo Bianco and Palazzo Rosso. In the latter, which now houses an art gallery, Dickens rented an apartment for a short while in June, 1845, in order to avoid the discomforts of the final removal from the Palazzo Peschiere. The adjoining Palazzo Durazzo, now the library of the British Consulate and therefore easily accessible, amply rewards the visitor who can spare the time to study its proportions and decoration.

When Dickens paid a brief visit to Genoa in 1853, he stayed at the

Hotel Croce di Malta, at Via San Guiseppe, 38. It still stands but is no longer an hotel.

* * * * *

Pictures from Italy contains the record of Dickens's various tours through the country which he undertook from Genoa. He travelled by road and most travellers to-day use the railways, which do not always follow the same routes. His descriptions of some of the famous cities are still remarkably apposite ; in others the changes wrought by the past hundred years have been extensive. Of these a striking example is Ferrara which is now a busy provincial town with all traces of the somnolent stupor of which we read in *Pictures from Italy* quite swept away. I must confess to disappointment with the castle which Dickens's description had led me to expect would look like a setting for a dramatic adaptation of a book by Mrs. Radcliffe. The ivy has been cleared away, the moat is invisible until one is standing over it and the whole structure so squat, plain and unromantic that, with its four corner towers, it now reminds one of nothing so much as Dickens's own description of St. John's, Westminster : " resembling some petrified monster, frightful and gigantic, on its back with its legs in the air." I was eager to visit the ruined theatre of Parma, Dickens's wonderful description of which I find so attractive, but I was deterred from making the somewhat lengthy journey on hearing that it had been all but destroyed in the recent war. It was not an ordinary theatre but an elaborate sixteenth-century pageant-playhouse for the staging of vast equestrian and aquatic spectacles. An account and pictures of it may be found in Gordon Craig's *Books and Theatres*. But for the modern tourist in Italy there is one chapter of Dickens's travel book which ranks as high as anything he ever wrote. I know of no description of Venice which approaches his " An Italian Dream." It is as true of to-day as of when it was written, and is the perfect second best if you cannot visit physically the Queen of the Adriatic.

DICKENS READS AT BOSTON

An interesting and hitherto unpublished account of Dickens's last Reading in Boston, Mass. in 1868, written in a letter by John Greenleaf Whittier, has been reproduced in John A. Pollard's new biography of the poet, and permission to quote it in *The Dickensian* has been courteously granted by the Houghton Mifflin Company. The original letter is in the Houghton Library at Harvard.

Edward Wagenknecht.

" I have ' made an effort ' as Mrs. Chick would say, & have heard Dickens. It was his last night in Boston. I found myself in the packed hall sandwiched between Ricd H. Dana Sen. & Longfellow with Mrs. Fields on one side of us & Mrs. Ames the other. We waited some half hour : a slight brisk man tripped up the steps, sparkling with ring & chain—tight vested wide bosomed, short dress coat, white choker ; tight pantaloons enclosing, as the Prairie girl said of Judge Douglass's—' a mighty slim chance of legs ' ! Somehow a slight reminder of his own Sim Tappertit in Barnaby Rudge. Face marked with thought as well as years—head bald or nearly so—a look of keen intelligence about the strong brow, & eye—the look of a man who has seen much & is wide awake to see more. I dont think he shows the great genius that he is—he might pass for a shrewd Massachusetts manufacturer or an active N.Y. merchant. But his reading is wonderful, far beyond my expectations. Those marvellous characters of his come forth, one by one, real personages, as if their original creator had breathed new life into them. You shut your eyes & there before you know are Pecksniff, & Sairey Gamp, Sam Weller & Dick Swiveller & all the rest. But it is idle to talk about it : you must beg, borrow, or steal a ticket & hear him. Another such star-shower is not to be expected in one's life-time. After the reading I called on him with Longfellow & the Fields."

THE COMPOSITION OF *DAVID COPPERFIELD*

By John Butt

IN *The Dickensian* (1949, pp. 129-38) I tried to define the purposes Dickens had in mind when making the memoranda for his monthly serial Numbers. I shall now use this and other evidence in an attempt to reconstruct some of the stages in the composition of *David Copperfield* from month to month.

The most serious of the many defects in modern editions of Dickens is that the reader has no means of telling where the Numbers begin and end. Without this information the reader cannot possibly appreciate the structural complexity of the novels. As he wrote, Dickens had of necessity to maintain two focuses. He had to consider the artistic integrity of the Number as well as the interrelationship of its constituent chapters; and he had also to consider the contribution which each Number must make to the purpose and design of the novel as a whole. I mentioned in my last article that from *Martin Chuzzlewit* onwards Dickens kept a steady eye upon this general purpose and design. He himself tells us what purpose he had in mind in *Chuzzlewit* and in *Dombey*, and it is not difficult to discover the purpose of such later novels as *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, and *Great Expectations*. But in *David Copperfield* the purpose is not so clear. Forster tells us* that throughout the latter part of 1848 Dickens's thoughts "were turning much to the forms his next book should take," and that "he took at once very gravely" Forster's suggestion that the book should be written in the first person, "though as yet not dreaming of any public use of his own personal and private recollections." We learn that in January, 1849, he decided to call his infant son Henry Fielding "in a kind of homage to the style of work he was now so bent on beginning" (ii. 431) and the same letter from which Forster quotes contains a suggestion for the character of Mr. Wickfield. Lastly, we find him in February, 1849, attempting to decide upon a title.

As evidence this amounts to little. The book was not designed as an autobiography, though autobiographical material was later incorporated. The reference to *Tom Jones* seems to suggest no more than the story of a young man's life from birth to marriage. And the draft titles, unlike the draft titles of *Bleak House* and *Hard Times*, give us no further clue to Dickens's overriding purpose, since "Mag's Diversions" means merely "the deuce and all," a title no more compromising than *As You Like It*. Forster, it is true, found the "unity of drift or purpose . . . apparent always," and he adds in explanation:

> By the course of the events we learn the value of self-denial and patience, quiet endurance of unavoidable ills, strenuous efforts against ills remediable; and everything in the fortunes of the actors warns us, to strengthen our generous emotions and to guard the purities of home.

Like much of Forster's criticism, this is excellently said; but we cannot be sure that it records Dickens's *original* purpose as distinct from his developing purpose, or that it is not a judgment made on re-reading the completed novel. We must therefore begin examining the Numbers without any certain external evidence of what the novel is to be about.

Part I. May, 1849.

Chapters I-III. Written in April, 1849.

The first Number is a charming and lavish piece of exposition. Apart from the rich possibilities latent in the characters of the Peggottys

* Forster, *Life of Dickens*, ed. of 1873, ii. 429.

and Betsey Trotwood, Dickens has provided himself in this Number with three possible themes for future development. The first is the mystery of Betsey Trotwood's husband. That this mystery was no casual embellishment of his preliminary sketch of her character but was intended for future use the Number plan* seems to confirm, for there we read the memorandum "Her old wrongs," implying something which Dickens needed to keep in mind.

The second theme is David's relations with Mr. Murdstone, whose excellent name was determined after three attempts recorded in the number plan, "Mr. Hasden, Murdle, Murden, Murdstone." We may be sure that Dickens at this point had already foreseen Mr. Murdstone's harsh treatment of David if not the very form which that treatment was to take in Part IV, for the reader receives more than one tactful warning. The "autobiographical" mode of writing is used with notable irony and economy when David discusses with Peggotty the subject of marriage and relates the tiff between Peggotty and Mrs. Copperfield after Mr. Murdstone's visit. Dickens uses the unwitting David to convey, without expressly saying so, that Mrs. Copperfield has been too easily won by flattery, and that Peggotty has good reason to disapprove the coming marriage. And here we may note the flutter of ominous excitement with which the first Number ends. David and Peggotty return from the visit to Yarmouth, but Mrs. Copperfield is not at the door to meet them. Peggotty with difficulty explains to David that he has "got a Pa . . . a new one," and her agitation affects David too. The scene in the parlour when David is at last brought to his mother is described with an economy of words for which Dickens is not often credited:

> My mother dropped her work, and arose hurriedly, but timidly I thought.
> "Now, Clara my dear," said Mr. Murdstone. "Recollect! controul yourself, always controul yourself! Davy boy, how do you do?"
> I gave him my hand. After a moment of suspense, I went and kissed my mother: she kissed me, patted me gently on the shoulder, and sat down again to her work. I could not look at her, I could not look at him, I knew quite well that he was looking at us both; and I turned to the window and looked out there, at some shrubs that were drooping their heads in the cold.

The agony to come is implied there, briefly but sufficiently. The drooping shrubs are an emblem of the cold which has invaded the home; and with another emblem, of the man who has come to live there, the Number is concluded:

> . . . the empty dog-kennel was filled up with a great dog—deep-mouthed and black-haired like Him—and he was very angry at the sight of me, and sprung out to get at me.

The third theme is as ominous as the second; it is Little Em'ly's future. The manuscript shows us that the scene at Yarmouth was elaborated in two respects after the draft of Part I was completed.

[1] As Dickens first conceived her, Mrs. Gummidge had no character at all. It was only after completing Chapter III that Dickens turned back and interpolated the long episode beginning "I soon found out that Mrs. Gummidge did not always make herself so agreeable as she might have been expected to do, under the circumstances of her residence with Mr. Peggotty." It is then that she becomes a "lone lorn creature," and, more significantly, a means of exemplifying the forbearing character of Mr. Peggotty.

[2] The second interpolation is more important still. In the first version Em'ly is no more than the little girl whom young David adored. On completing the chapter Dickens added the long passage, beginning "'You're quite a sailor, I suppose?' I said to Em'ly" and ending "This may be premature. I have set it down too soon, perhaps. But let it stand." In this passage Dickens reveals Em'ly's wish "to be a

* Reproduced in Forster, ed. cit., iii, 133.

lady " so as to prevent Mr. Peggotty and Ham from risking their lives in stormy weather. She is afraid of the sea for their sake, she declares, but not a whit for her own ; and she demonstrates her fearlessness by running " along a jagged timber which protruded from the place we stood upon, and overhung the deep water at some height, without the least defence." She seemed to spring forward to her destruction ; and, David, recalling a scene which had so much impressed him, reflected " there has been a time since . . . when I have asked myself the question, would it have been better for little Em'ly to have had the waters close above her head that morning in my sight ; and when I have answered Yes, it would have been."

There can be no doubt that when Dickens interpolated this passage into his draft of the first Number, he had already foreseen what part Em'ly was to play. Someone would offer to make her a lady on speciously honourable terms, and Em'ly would " fall " in attempting to improve the lot of Mr. Peggotty and Ham.* But whether this theme first occurred to Dickens after completing Chapter III or whether it had already been meditated and set aside for ampler treatment in a later number, it is perhaps impossible to determine. There are thirty sheets of manuscript in Part I, which is rather more than Dickens's normal monthly stint. It is possible that the galley proofs showed him that he had more space than the number of manuscript sheets would lead him to believe, and that he thereupon decided to broach this important and already meditated theme at the earliest possible moment.

Part II. June, 1849.
Chapters IV-VI. Completed by May 5th, 1849.

Having raised the reader's curiosity at the end of Part I about David's relations with Mr. Murdstone, Dickens must necessarily satisfy it first of all. Accordingly the first chapter of Part II takes up that theme. Dickens's notes on the left hand side of the Number plan read as follows :

> Miss Murdstone/Their religion/Picture of all that, and its effect on Davy's life./Cast off and getting sullen./Qy His books and reading ?/His offence, and confinement upstairs. *Child's remembrance of the latter.*/Sent away/

These memoranda relate entirely to the first chapter and, with the memoranda on the right hand side,† cover all the incidents except Peggotty's visit to David in his confinement. We may perhaps deduce that Chapter IV required Dickens's most attentive care and that the details of David's sending away (Chapters V and VI) could be improvised in the act of writing. Certainly the bareness of the incidents in Chapters V and VI, as recorded in the memoranda on the right hand side, contrast remarkably with the lavishly-fanciful detail in which Dickens expands them, " The carrier & Peggotty " : whether this was written before or after the chapter to which it applies, it contains no suggestion of how the opening of Barkis's courtship is presented ; and though the next note " Waiter—Glass of ale—chops—pudding " is more detailed, it scarcely serves to recall the waiter's deceptions and his story of Mr. Topsawyer. And so of the remaining memoranda— " journey/ to be left till called for / School with the boys all at home/ ' Take care of him. He bites '/ "—if written after the chapter was composed, they make an inadequate record of the narrative ; but if

* It was in the nature of things highly probable that Dickens should use such a theme in *David Copperfield* for his correspondence shows that since May, 1846, he had been giving much thought to the scheme proposed by his friend Miss Coutts to establish a Home in the West End of London for recovery of fallen women.

† " Progress of his mother's weakness under the Murdstones./Miss Murdstone/Beats' him/Bites/Shut up and dismissed."

they were written before, we are led to deduce that the scene of Mr. Mell's visit to his mother and the sketch of Mrs. Fibbitson, an earlier Grandmother Smallweed, were elaborated as the pen moved in Dickens's hand.

But there is an objection to this argument. The memoranda of Chapter VI are equally bare and brief, inadequate as a record, thin if used as a preliminary sketch :—" Mr. Creakle./ return of the boys/ spending his money/ Steerford/ Steerforth./" Yet this is the chapter in which we are first introduced to Steerforth, the foundations of whose character are laid with obvious care. How deftly Dickens suggests by the confiscation and disposal of David's pocket money that Steerforth's actions are not in keeping with his heroic demeanour ! And if we have any doubt that Steerforth is reserved for a dark future, let us observe in that description of him lying asleep the first anticipation of the final scene on Yarmouth sands in the last paragraph of Chapter LV :

> I raised myself, I recollect, to look at him where he lay in the moonlight, with his handsome face turned up, and his head reclining easily on his arm. He was a person of great power in my eyes ; that was, of course, the reason of my mind running on him. No veiled future dimly glanced upon him in the moonbeams.

He is, so far as we have come, the only possible seducer for Little Em'ly, and that Dickens had already destined him for this rôle we may guess from a hint of the young libertine, undeveloped as yet, but casual and untrustworthy in his approaches to women :

> " You haven't got a sister, have you ? " said Steerforth, yawning.
> " No," I answered.
> " That's a pity," said Steerforth. " If you had had one, I should think she would have been a pretty, timid, little, bright-eyed sort of girl. I should have liked to know her. Good night, young Copperfield."

Part III. July, 1849.

Chapters VII-IX. Completed by June 21st, 1849.

The confidence which Dickens felt in his story at this juncture is reflected in a letter to Forster dated June 6th, 1849.* "*Copperfield* half done," he wrote ; " I feel, thank God, quite confident in the story. I have a move in it ready for this month ; another for next ; and another for next." We may hazard a guess that the first " move " was the meeting of Mr. Peggotty and Ham with Steerforth at Salem House in Chapter VII. The Plan for this Number, reproduced in *The Dickensian* (1949, pp. 130-131), clearly was written before the composition of the Number, and reveals that Dickens had first chosen Peggotty as David's visitor. It was a natural choice to make ; but it seems to have flashed across Dickens's mind—the form of the memorandum supports this—that if Mr. Peggotty, a much less likely visitor, came instead of his sister, the way lay open for a meeting between him and Steerforth, which might in turn give rise to a meeting between Steerforth and Em'ly.

Most of this chapter is given to the exposition of Steerforth's character which is presented to us with an irony that recalls Dickens's professed master, Fielding. Every adult reader recognizes the mean and selfish motives of Steerforth's actions, but David could never " help thinking . . . what a noble fellow he was in appearance " and every unworthy action of his patron is given a suitably heroic and generous interpretation.

With Steerforth's character sufficiently well formed in the first chapter, Dickens can turn back to pursue the progress of the Murdstones' influence in the two remaining chapters. Having decided that David's

* The letter is misdated 6 June, 1850, in the Nonesuch edition, and Forster (ii. 453) is wrong in referring it to the second Number which Dickens had completed in the first week of May. See his letter to Evans, 5 May 1849.

mother shall die, the obvious point at which her death will have maximum effect is the last chapter of the Number. " Get a clean pocket-handkerchief ready for the close of ' Copperfield ' No. 3," he writes to Lemon on June 25th ; " ' simple and quiet, but very natural and touching.'—*Evening Bore.*"

Manuscript and proof alike disclose some of the adjustments of emphasis in the pathos of this chapter. The " RAT-tat-tats " of Mr. Joram's hammer were an afterthought and so was the first passage of repartee between Minnie and her father.* A passage describing the morning of the funeral was ruled out in proof. It read as follows :

> When the day came, I remember being awakened in the morning by the sharp strokes of a spade, and that I looked out of the window, and saw men working in the churchyard, underneath the tree, and went to bed and wept. I remember that I lay there, sobbing, until Peggotty came up to help me dress myself, and that being in her black dress for the first time, she wrung her hands—a thing it turned my very blood to see her do —and gave way to her sorrow before me, for the only time in all my knowledge.

When proofs of Part III reached him, Dickens found that he had overstepped his monthly allowance of thirty-two pages by thirty-five lines of type. Something had to be sacrificed, and this was one of the passages cut. Its omission involves a small but appreciable relaxing of the tension.

To be continued

AN UNKNOWN PLAY BY DICKENS?

By Gerald G. Grubb

IN the Berg Collection, New York Public Library, there is an autograph letter from Charles Dickens to John Pritt Harley, written from Furnival's Inn, dated " Saturday Evening," without indication of month or year, in which the former says : " I have by me a little piece in one act called ' Cross Purposes,' which I wrote long before I became Boz."† He tells Harley that this little drama will " admit of the introduction of any music," that he had intended to send it to him, but that he had just decided to bring it in person.

Therefore, in Dickens's own words, *Cross Purposes* was written before August, 1834, if he was thinking of the actual date of his becoming " Boz," or before December, 1833, if he was thinking of the first sketch that was later classed under the general title of *Sketches by Boz.* This play seems to belong with such juvenilia as *The Stratagems of Rozanza* and *The O'Thello*, but surely not so far back in his youth as *Misnar.*

The letter to Harley offering " Cross Purposes " for stage production was written not later than April, 1837, when he moved from Furnival's Inn to 48 Doughty Street. This letter most probably belongs to that year, the year of Dickens's most intimate associations with Harley. As the play was offered to the comedian of Saint James's Theatre, it may be safely assumed that it was a comedy or a farce ; and as it would admit of the introduction of music, it could have been presented as a burletta.

Since a check of all catalogues, indexes, and other publications available to me, including *The Dickensian*, has failed to shed any light on this play, there are certain questions that I would like to raise : Is this play known under some other title ? Is it known under this title, but not hitherto known to have been written by Dickens ? Is

* The passage beginning " ' Father !' said Minnie, playfully. ' What a porpoise you do grow ! ' " and ending " Mr. Omer took me back into the parlor, breathing with some difficulty on the way "

† Reference to material in the Berg Collection is made with the permission of the authorities of that Collection and of The New York Public Library.

there any record that this play was produced at the Saint James or any other theatre? Does the manuscript still exist in some public or private collection? Or, is this the youthful effort to which Georgina Hogarth had reference when she wrote to Frederic G. Kitton, saying:

> Charles Dickens was extremely sensitive as to the possibility of any rubbish being given to the public in the form of "early writings," so much so that, when a lady showed him with great pride a manuscript of some play written by him when he was very young, he made a bargain with her by making her a present of the MS. of a Christmas-Book, just completed, on condition that she gave up the boyish production to him—which he had the satisfaction of putting into the fire with his own hands.*

* J. B. Van Amerongen. *The Actor in Dickens* (New York: D. Appleton and Company 1927), p. 116.

MORE REAL (?) DICKENS

By T. W. Hill

YET another Study of Dickens. A new method of approach to the problem of trying to explain his complex personality. Mr. Jack Lindsay†, applying Freudian methods to Dickens's mental development, endeavours with a wealth of Freudian terminology to explain his influence in the growth of the novel both in England and abroad.

"'Tis love, 'tis love, that makes the world go round," and Mr. Lindsay traces all Dickens's activities as thinker, as writer, as reader, and as actor, to love. A dual kind of love, a combination of spiritual love with the physical appeal. This started in Dickens's early childhood with mother-love on account of his delicate health, and sister-love induced by his close companionship with his sister Fanny—the "star-sister"—a constantly recurring theme. The mother-love was apparently shattered by his mother's wish to send him back to the blacking factory, and the sister-love by Fanny's behaviour during his first courtship. But both lived for ever in his memories of childhood—suffering-childhood, and appear again and again in his books under various aspects, as well as in his life, especially in his married life. There are many instances of the indefinable link between mother and son, even when the link is broken, as in the case of Mrs. Clennam and Arthur; the sister-brother combination is reproduced in Ruth Pinch and Tom. The antipathy of the two kinds of love is said to be shewn in Dickens's infatuation with Mary Hogarth in his early married life. but Mr. Lindsay in dealing with Mary's death on page 131 need not have been unnece-sarily indecorous by writing "Kate, whom he had lost no time in impregnating again, had a miscarriage," and, in connection with the Montreal theatricals, on page 225, "he had allotted to her no playing part except that of bed-companion and breeding mother."

The story of Dickens's association with Miss Ellen Ternan as told by Thomas Wright (who is described as "sniffing out") is accepted without question, and Mr. Lindsay does not seem to have taken any trouble to verify Wright's statements. The attitude of those who await reliable confirmation of the statements is described as "The Great Lie." This is surely contrary to all sense of English justice, which places the onus of proof on the prosecution and does not require a proof of innocence from the accused; it alas contravenes the ordinary decencies of human intercourse. To write of Miss Ternan that she was "mercenary," "a woman he could not subdue," "using him for her own ends," and so on, while her son and her daughter are still alive, is a breach of the respectable standards of genuine criticism and biography. Wright did wait till all Dickens's own children were dead

† Charles Dickens: A biographical and critical study by Jack Lindsay. Andrew Dakers, 18s.

before publishing his "Life of Charles Dickens" in 1935, and Miss Storey did not publish her "Dickens and Daughter" till 1939.

By the way, we now are told the name of the "old lady" in the carriage with Dickens in the Staplehurst railway accident. She was Ellen's mother, who was about Dickens's own age, 53; old lady indeed! One wonders how Mr. Lindsay found out who it was.

Mr. Lindsay's book is an interesting addition to the Dickensian's library and can be read with pleasure, provided the reader has a knowledge of Dickens's writings as great as the author's own. The conclusions will not in all probability meet with universal acceptance as they seem to rob Dickens of any originality and postulate that practically every prominent character in his novels represents in different form his personal feelings, founded almost entirely on his child-memories, his family-relationships, and his love-experiences. (Even his public readings of the Murder-scene in *Oliver Twist* are said to be kind of revenge on his final infatuation "enacting before everyone his inner drama of despair, of hatred and frustration.")

What a Towering Giant Dickens must be. None of his critics in their search among details seems capable of appreciating his full stature. His *Genius* eludes them all. Although each succeeding biographer places him next to (if below) Shakespeare, apparently none of them knows *why* he occupies so noble and notable a position in English literature, and apparently never will.

Now, let us get back to where we were before the "sniffing out." Let us gladly accept Charles Dickens for himself, for his greatness, for his unapproachable romances, and for the grandeur of his achievement.

CONCERNING A PORCUPINE

By Mary A. Macey
(Victoria B.C.)

THERE may be some who, with myself, have wondered how a Porcupine came to be included in the procession of melancholy itinerant organ-grinders who daily took their way past the door of Mr. Dombey's town house. The solution of this mystery has just come to light. For in an extract from a London newspaper of one hundred years ago, I find certain information concerning the aforementioned rodent. Which information I am glad to offer in its entirety. It runs as follows:

"The following curious particulars connected with the tribe of travelling mendicants, and their way of living, will, we have no doubt, prove interesting to our readers. The haunts of these unfortunate beings are in Vine-street, Saffron-hill, Bleeding-heart-yard, Holborn-hill; Coal-yard in Drury-lane; and in the purlieus of Shoreditch. Whole houses are occupied by these wretched boys, who sleep eight and nine in a bed. Each boy's monkey is chained near him every night on going to rest, and the other curiosities are placed in situations appointed by the owner; so that on starting out in the morning, each boy takes his own companion. On the ground floor reside the men—some Italian and some English—to whom the monkeys, etc., really belong, and they provide each boy with a lodging at fourpence a night, with a basin of gruel in the morning upon starting on their perigrinations, having first paid the master for the use of whatever curiosity they may take with them to exhibit. The following are the charges made by the proprietors upon the juvenile crew.

For a Porcupine (very novel, there being only two), 2s. a day.
For a monkey (undressed), 3s. a day.
For a box of white mice, 1s. 6d. a day.
For a dog and a monkey (the latter may be frequently seen in the street, riding on the dog's back), 3s. a day.

For dancing dogs, four in number, including dresses, spinning wheel, pipe and tabor, etc., 5s. a day.
For a box of wax figures of the Siamese Twins, 2s. a day.
For an organ with figures waltzing, 3s. 6d. a day.

Some of these boys, by their artlessness of manner and gesticulation, it is said, obtain 6s. or 7s. a day, and some more. One of them, lately, upon being asked what was the largest sum he ever realised in one day, replies 15s., which he accounted for in the following manner:—One day, when ambulating about the Marine Parade, at Brighton, with his dog and monkey on his back, a gentleman offered him 15s. to allow him to throw a stone into the sea for the dog to fetch. The boy consented, the stone was thrown, and away jumped the dog with the monkey into the sea; the monkey fastened tight round the dog's neck, and both reaching the beach in safety, the boy received his premium.

Morning Chronicle.

THE DICKENSIAN BACKGROUND

By P. R. Aytiman

ONLY a few years ago it was fashionable to deride everything and everybody connected with Victorian England. It was a bad old time, entirely materialistic, worshipping Mammon only, having rather vulgar tastes in art, literature, education and music; its progress towards the light was negligible, and the sooner it was forgotten the better. But as the twentieth century has grown into maturity the distant scene has begun to attain a truer perspective, and latterly there has been a resurgence of interest in the lives and times of our grand- and great-grand-parents. Specialists in history, economics, and social science have burrowed in blue-books, records and diaries to get at the facts, while modern novelists have exercised their imagination in a more or less successful effort to rebuild the past for our entertainment.

Some of the credit for this revival of interest is, I think, due to the work of the Dickens Fellowship, founded in 1902, the year after Queen Victoria died. The constant study of Dickens and his work has kept alive, during the years of comparative neglect of the immediate past, a lively interest in the conditions of nineteenth-century England.

An illustration from
Charles Dickens and Early Victorian England
By kind permission of Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd.

There now seems no end to the making of many books about Victorian and Dickensian times, and among the writers

who are helping in this Mr. R. J. Cruikshank holds a worthy place, the worthier because his approach to it is factual and not imaginative, and he couples with a wide and understanding outlook on essentials a vivid and picturesque style. Four years ago Mr. Cruikshank in his exuberant enthusiasm wrote of the years 1846 to 1946 and called his record *The Roaring Century*. It celebrated the centenary of the Daily News, and in his introduction Mr. Cruikshank confessed that his pages might shew an " excessive preoccupation with Charles Dickens." In his new book, covering a much shorter period, 1837 to 1870, he throws hesitation to the winds and boldly calls it *Charles Dickens and Early Victorian England**. The mood is no longer " roaring " and the general tone is more contemplative and deliberate, but the whole is written with a delightfully light touch on even the most serious themes, and its purpose is to build up a background of the social conditions presented in fictional form in Dickens's works.

History cannot be divided into bulk-headed compartments ; each period, fades gradually into the period that follows like the old-fashioned " dissolving views." The eighteenth century way of life did not cease on December 31st, 1800, but persisted well into the following century until the general speed of existence was accelerated by the coming of the steam locomotive in the eighteen-forties. Mr. Cruikshank notes that the last of the great Georgian figures did not disappear till Lord Palmerston died in 1865.

Does it ever occur to a Dickensian that *Sketches by Boz* and the early portions of the *Pickwick Papers* were written in the reign of King William the Fourth, and that Queen Victoria's accession coincided with Mr. Pickwick's incarceration in the Fleet Prison ?

The Victorian Era did not close with the great Queen's death on January 22nd, 1901, and its effects were felt until at least the cataclysm of the First World War, 1914-1918, and therefore Mr. Cruikshank quite properly has some studies of conditions well within the memory of middle-aged readers, and some of these portions of his books are amongst the most entertaining. One cannot help noticing that, in spite of its title, the book does not exhibit any " excessive preoccupation with Charles Dickens," but the author in his Section Headings utilises Dickens's own book-titles in a most ingenious manner. The progress from earlier stagnation towards freedom and liberal thought is entitled " Great Expectations " ; the next section dealing with the resulting social struggles is " Hard Times " ; the partial realisation of the benefits of enlightenment becomes " The Battle of Life " ; and the religious revival, the Oxford Movement, and the rise of the Evolution Theory in the middle years is called appropriately " The Haunted Man." Dickens died almost exactly half-way through Queen Victoria's reign, and Mr. Cruikshank uses his writings to illuminate special points, making the work most welcome to the reader of the novels and fugitive pieces ; it recalls the greatness of Dickens's literary achievement, much of our own family tradition, and explains the immense influence that Dickens exercised on his times.

For the lover of facts and for the benefit of those desirous of exploring more deeply there are some useful appendices : (*a*) a selective list of books recommended for study ; (*b*) a classified Chronology of events from 1837 to 1870 ; and (*c*) several statistical tables and " Isotype " diagrams displaying the progress of England during that important period of our history.

The casual reader, the earnest student, and the present writer, are greatly indebted to Mr. Cruikshank for what has evidently been to him a labour of love.

* Pitman 20s.

NOTES ON *NICHOLAS NICKLEBY*

By T. W. Hill

(*Continued from page* 48)

Chapter XL

1. FLED AWAY. Bearing in mind the limits of the "built-up-area" of the outlying districts of London at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it may be assumed that Smike, starting about six o'clock (see previous chapter) would strike north from Somers Town towards Highgate or Finchley at either of which places he would find the "quiet of a country road" as darkness fell. He returned and re-entered London at the western extremity, probably by the Hampstead Road and so, after nine o'clock, as "the greater part of the shops were closed," to Golden Square. He must have covered eight or nine miles.

2. OLD BLACKING BOTTLES. The brown glazed stone-ware bottles used for holding the liquid blacking would make admirable hyacinth bulb-holders, as they were not unlike modern bulb-glasses in height and capacity.

3. LOOKED EAGERLY AT THE SUPERSCRIPTION. It was surely impertinence on the part of a junior clerk with so short a service as two or three weeks, and especially after a polite intimation from Tim to mind his own business, for Nicholas to examine his employer's correspondence. However, "Love will find a way."

4. OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF MIND. This saying is found as long ago as the fourteenth century, as Thomas à Kempis uses it in *The Imitation of Christ*: "And when he is out of sight, quickly also is he out of mind."

5. ELEVEN O'CLOCK. A curious time for an appointment to be made by a young lady, even if she was an only child whose mother was dead, and even if she *was* attended by a servant.

6. EDGEWARE ROAD. Properly Edgware Road, but occasionally spelt Edgeware in old maps.

7. PRAYERS OF THE GIRL. But she had gone: "hurried up the stairs."

8. NICHOLAS WENT HOME. He must have reached home at Bow at a fairly late hour, as he started from Miss Bobster's house after eleven o'clock with seven or eight miles to walk.

Chapter XLI

1. THE GENTLEMAN NEXT DOOR. There seems to be a little confusion here. In Chapter XXXVII we are told "the bottom of his garden joins the bottom of ours," and now he lives "next door" and the "wall dividing their gardens from that of the next cottage," which like their own was a detached building, yet in Chapter XLIX he is found in the chimney, implying apparently that the houses were only semi-detached; although it is only fair to add that it is not distinctly stated whether he had come *down* the chimney (in spite of the "shuffling, sliding, rumbling, and struggling sounds,") or had got into the house and had secreted himself *up* the chimney. However, it does not really matter; the comedy is the essence of the story.

2. STATUE AT CHARING CROSS. That of King Charles I, cast in 1633, erected 1675. It was temporarily removed for safety during the war, and was replaced in 1946.

3. PUMP AT ALDGATE. The first pump, over an underground well or spring dated from the sixteenth century. In 1876 the well was filled in as insalubrious, and the water supply is now drawn from the water-main below the street.

4. TOP OF THE WALL. "Springing on the top of the wall . . . standing on one leg . . . a dirty hand was seen to glide stealthily and swiftly along the top of the wall . . . *dropped* into a sitting posture." How did all this take place on a wall the top of which was covered with "broken glass bottles" to the spikes of which a "large vegetable-marrow" could stick (see Chapter XXXVII)? Again, it is the comedy that matters.

5. METHOD IN HIS MADNESS. One of the most pregnant of our proverbs, founded on Polonius's aside in "Hamlet.":

"Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't."
(Act II, Sc. 2.)

Chapter XLII

1. (CHAPTER HEADING). BEST OF FRIENDS MUST PART. This well-known saying appears in various forms in successive ages, *e.g.*

"For friends, you know, must part."
Roxburghe Ballads (1620).

"But dearest friends, they say, must part."
On the death of Dr. Swift (1731).

2. PLAY SUCH A KNIFE AND FORK. Play here means perform like a virtuoso, as on a musical instrument.

Chapter XLIII

1. MAKE A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY. In its English form this familiar saying goes back to Chaucer's day: "So maken vertu of necessitee" (The knight's tale). Shakespeare, Dryden, Rabelais and many others have used it.

2. AMERICA? YOU KNOW BETTER THEN THAT. Why should Mr. Frank know? He had been to Germany for five years; the Cheerybles were German merchants (Chapter XXXV) and later in this chapter the elder Mr. Cheeryble chaffed Frank for "thinking of his German flame." It seems that Dickens's thoughts were often about America; he put similar sentiments into Tony Weller's mouth in *Pickwick Papers* and a few years later went there himself.

3. PROVIDE YOURSELVES. In connexion with employment, particularly domestic employment, "provide" is commonly used to mean furnish or supply. Shakespeare has it in this sense:

"I am provided of a torch bearer."
("Merchant of Venice," Act II, Sc. 4.)

4. PRIDE IS ONE OF THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS. The others are wrath, envy, lust, gluttony, avarice and sloth.

5. TWO CARDINAL VIRTUES—FAITH AND HOPE. The other five are charity, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

Chapter XLIV

1. RECORDING ANGEL. The angel who keeps a register of men's good and bad actions. He is not mentioned by name in the Bible, but Sterne (1713-1768) has this sentence in *Tristram Shandy*: "The accusing spirit, which flew up to heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in; and the recording angel, as he wrote it down, dropped a tear upon the word and blotted it out for ever."

2. KNOW THYSELF. Dickens says this is a Scriptural admonition, but Dean J. S. Stevens points out that it is not in the Bible and that it is the motto of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and that it is also in Chaucer (*Dickensian* 1925, p. 154). Pope also refers to it in the Essay on Man:

"Know thou thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man."

3. BETWEEN NINE AND TEN O'CLOCK. Madame Mantalini's establishment still kept its usual hours.

Chapter XLV

1. SARACEN WITH TWO NECKS. A real Mrs. Nicklebyism; the good lady was evidently confusing the inn-sign with that of the "Swan with Two Necks," which is itself a corruption of "Swan with two nicks" in allusion to the method of marking swans' beaks for identity of ownership.

2. PASTORS AND MASTERS. Quoted from the Church Catechism: "To submit myself to all my governours, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters." (Duty towards my Neighbour.)

3. YOUR PRAISE, SIR, IS COMMENDATION INDEED. A neat, if sneering, adaptation of:

"Approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley is praise indeed," which occurs in "A Cure for the Heartache," Act V, Sc. 2, by Thomas Morton (1797).

4. PROTRACTED AND WEARING ANXIETY. No doubt Ralph Nickleby knew what could be accomplished in this way. Anyhow, Dickens did, as he shewed in *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit*.

Chapter XLVI

1. BEFORE YOU COULD SAY JACK ROBINSON. Who Jack Robinson was has never been traced, but the saying appears to have been commonly current in the seventeenth century.

"I'd do it as soon as say Jack Robinson."

Fanny Burney: Evelina (1778).

I'd get her off before you could say Jack Robinson (1812).

2. HEARTLESS BLACKLEG. The word blackleg is here used in its original meaning of a swindler, especially on the turf or at cards. It is said to be derived from the black legs of the gamé cock.

3. RULES OF THE KING'S BENCH. These "Rules" existed till 1861 when the King's Bench Prison ceased to be used for debtors. The "Rules" was a district outside the prison where prisoners were allowed to live under certain conditions; it was about three miles in circumference and extended from St. George's Fields to Borough High Street.

4. OBELISK. This monument to Lord Mayor Crosby was erected in 1771 as a mile-stone in St. George's Circus, whence it was removed in 1907 to the grounds of Bethlem Hospital, now known as Kennington Park.

5. FRAGMENTS OF A TENT-BEDSTEAD. A tent-bedstead has its bed-posts lengthened upwards to form a frame from which are hung draperies that enclose the bed as in a tent. The "turpentining" accentuates the squalor of the house which was probably infested with bed-bugs, against which turpentine is a preventive, but not a cure.

Chapter XLVII

1. TIME IS MONEY. A maxim founded on an aphorism by Bacon in his essay on "Despatch": "Time is the measure of business, as money is of wares."

2. PITH AND MARROW. Both words mean the same thing; the collocation is for emphasis.

3. DEAF AS AN ADDER. The adder or viper is not deaf, but it has no external ears, so it may be dull of hearing. The proverb appears in the Authorised Version of the Bible, in Psalm LVIII, verses 4 and 5: "The deaf adder stoppeth her ears; which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer." A more modern translation would probably be "asp."

4. GOOD PAIR FOR A CURRICLE. A delicious jibe at the two men, as a curricle was a smart-looking carriage drawn by two horses, and was commonly owned by sporting men and fashionable folk.

Chapter XLVIII

1. THE SEVENTH ADDITION. There seems to be some unravelled mystery about the Crummles children. Ninetta the Infant Phenomenon, was about sixteen (Chapter XXIII) and thought to be a "closer" and therefore the last previous child. How old, then, were the two boys and were they the oldest, as Mrs. Crummles had buried three, ages and sex not specified?

2. OTHELLO USED TO BLACK HIMSELF ALL OVER. An allusion, probably, to a Mr. Jemmy White, manager of a small Nottingham theatre in the eighteenth century who blacked himself from head to foot to give himself "a better idea of what a black man should feel and be."

3. LITERARY GENTLEMAN. The mention of this person "who had dramatised in his time two hundred and forty-seven novels—some of them faster than they had come out," is a "palpable hit" at unauthorised versions of Dickens's former books. This is said by Forster to be Dickens's punishment of Edward Stirling, who produced a completed version (dramatised) of *Nicholas Nickleby* when only six numbers out of the complete twenty of the novel had been published. T. E. Pemberton affirms that the "adapter" referred to was W. T. Moncrieff, who seized on the works of Scott, P. Egan, and Lytton as well as those of Dickens; he attempted a justification of himself in a long introduction to his production to "The Pickwickians" in 1837.

4. RICHARD TURPIN, TOM KING, JERRY ABERSHAW. All notorious highwaymen.

5. BILL WAS AN ADAPTOR. Mere effrontery on the part of the "literary gentleman" in so alluding to Shakespeare. The whole of the argument is most ingenious, and must have appealed to Nicholas, who had adapted a play from the French so recently.

Chapter XLIX

1. THERE IS A DREAD DISEASE. Here Dickens shews his usual intimate acquaintance with symptoms of illness, in this case with the manifestations of consumption (phthisis).

2. COCK LANE GHOST. For an account of this imposture, see *The Dickensian*, 1939, p. 10, article by Edith M. Davies.

3. TRAIN UP A GHOST. A characteristic confusion of ideas by Mrs. Nickleby. The association of "clergyman" and "grew up" reminded her of scripture, Proverbs, XXII, v. 6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."

4. ONCE POPULAR AIR. The sentimental song referred to was composed by Sir H. R. Bishop (1786-1855) to words of which the author has not been traced:

> "And has she then failed in her truth?
> The beautiful maid I adore;
> Shall I never again hear her voice
> Nor see her lov'd form any more?"

5. PIG-FACED LADY. F. G. Kitton suggests that this refers to "The Wonderful Miss Anderson," an Irish lady born with a pig-like face; she had a fortune of £20,000 and was fed from a silver trough. George Morland sketched her portrait.

6. MRS. ROWLAND WHO BATHES IN KALYDOR. Kalydor was the trade name of a "refreshing preparation for the complexion dispelling the cloud of langour. . . ." It was manufactured by Rowland and Son, who also specialised in Macassar oil as a dressing for the hair, and caused the introduction of the "anti-macassar" as a protection for the chair-back. Rowlands were constant advertisers in the monthly parts of Dickens's novels.

7. THREE HOURS OF SILENCE. Supposing that Tim and the others had departed at nine o'clock (it was after supper and there had been the adventure with the gentleman from next door) and that Mrs. Nickleby had gone to bed Kate must have sat till at least midnight. It will be remembered from Chapter XXXIX that Nicholas could not have arrived home after the interview with Miss Bobster till about 1-30 a.m.

Chapter L

1. LITTLE RACE COURSE AT HAMPTON COURT. Now known as Hurst Park.

2. PEA-AND-THIMBLE TABLES. The invitation to a greenhorn to guess under which of three thimbles a pea is concealed is not often extended nowadays; police supervision is generally near.

3. ATHENAEUM CLUB-HOUSE. This is a slip; many of the West End Clubs had temporary marquees erected during race-meetings, but the Athenaeum was not among them. Moreover, the rules of that august institution are very strict that "'no game of mere chance may be played." It seems curious that Dickens did not know this, as he was elected, for his literary distinction, a member of the club, in 1838 while he was writing *Nicholas Nickleby*.

4. FRENCH HAZARD. A game played with two dice.

5. LA MERVEILLE. Another French gambling game. This appears only in the first edition of the book. In later editions the words "and other games" are substituted.

6. NEWMARKET COAT. A tightly-fitting overcoat used originally by horsemen. Received its name from Newmarket, one of the finest and one of the oldest race-courses in the world (dating from 1605).

Chapter LI

1. POST-OBITS FELL IN. A pleasant recollection of Gride's. A post-obit is a debt collectable by the lender from the estate of some specified person from whom the debtor has expectations after his decease.

2. NECESSITY HAS NO LAW. This is addressed to the reader. The proverbial excuse of the person who intends to do as he wishes:

> "So spake the fiend, and, with necessity,
> The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds."
>
> (Milton: "Paradise Lost," IV.)

Chapter LII

1. NICK. This is the first time that Newman Noggs addresses Nicholas in a familiar way.

2. WESTMINSTER BRIDGE. The first bridge, erected 1739-50, consisted of fifteen arches and was provided with alcoves for foot passengers. It was replaced by the present structure in 1862. The alcoves are referred to also in *Barnaby Rudge*.

3. EEL-PIE ISLAND. This ait received its name from the Eel-pie house, for nearly two centuries a favourite resort for excursionists on the River Thames. The house was pulled down in 1830 and replaced by the modern hotel.

4. ITALIAN-IRONING OF FRILLS. See note 10, Chapter XVI. The flouncing of trousers refers to the elaborate flounces that at one time decorated ladies' underwear; the trousers often reached the shoes and shewed below the skirt.

5. JOURNEYMAN. At one time a workman who was paid by the day, and from day to day; it has come to mean a mechanic or artisan. (From the French *journée* derived from latin *diurnus*, a day.)

Chapter LIII

1. FAINT HEART NEVER WON FAIR LADY. A very ancient proverb that doubtless had its origin in the days of chivalry; one of its earliest forms is in John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (1390): "As men sein, when herte is failed, Then schel no castell ben assailed." Its modern version appears in Elderton's ballad, "Brittain's Ida" (1569).

2. THERE'LL BE ONLY SHE AND ME. A grammatical slip for "she and I."

Chapter LIV

1. BRAY LYING ON THE FLOOR QUITE DEAD. In Chapter XLVII, Gride says "he can't live long . . . his complaint is one of the heart"; but the description of Bray in Chapter XLVI suggests that he was suffering from some form of consumption brought on by a life of profligacy.

Chapter LV

1. FLEET PRISON FOR SAFETY. A muddled fancy quite appropriate from Mrs. Nickleby.

2. RUSHLIGHT SHADES. These upright iron cylinders were pierced with holes and stood in a dish surrounded by a little moat of water. In *Pickwick Papers* the lady in the yellow curl papers had a rushlight "like a gigantic lighthouse in a particularly small piece of water." One of these rushlights is preserved at the Dickens Museum.

3. HEWER OF WOOD AND DRAWER OF WATER. A biblical description of necessary household worker: "And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation." (Jos. ix, 27.)

4. RECKONING WITHOUT OUR HOST. A saying dating from the fifteenth century or earlier, and meaning calculating one's bill at a tavern without consulting the landlord. In William Caxton's *Blanchardyn* (1489) can be read: "It ys sayd in common that 'who soeuer rekeneth wythoute his hoste, he rekeneth twys for ones'."

Chapter LVI

1. IT'S AN ILL WIND AS BLOWS NO GOOD TO NOBODY. A good specimen of Squeers's English. Had he in mind the proverb that is used in Shakespeare? "Ill blows the wind that profits nobody" ("King Henry VI," Part III, Act II, Sc. 5). There are many variants.

2. ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. A small bribe, surely, for a man of Squeers's income (£800 a year).

Chapter LVII

1. BLACK BOTTLE. We learn lower down that it contained "raw spirits." It was nearly a "widow's cruise" for capacity. In par. 2 Squeers helped himself; this lasted him till par. 12 when he had "a full glass and emptied

it " ; in par. 30 he has another full glass and empties it before giving Peg another full glass ; in par. 34 he derives fresh facetiousness from the bottle, quantity not stated ; in par. 36 he helps himself again and so does Peg ; in par. 51 he plies Peg " freely with the liquor " and has " frequent applications " himself ; and in par. 53 " hands her the glass." One can only suspect that Dickens must have been thinking of actors in a play overdoing their part by constantly putting to their lips drinking vessels containing just nothing.

2. QUOTING AT RANDOM FROM THE GRAMMAR. Probably Lindley Murray, the authoritative grammar of the period.

3. BONED. Slang for stole.

4. ENGROSSING HAND. Large writing used in legal documents.

CHAPTER LVIII

1. LOCK OF HER HAIR. How had Smike become possessed of a lock of Kate's hair ? He had never been close enough to her to help himself, and there is no record that he had ever summoned up the courage to ask her for one, or that she had ever voluntarily given him one.

CHAPTERS LIX TO LXII

1. RALPH passed an extraordinary day. After a series of almost sleepless nights, and without having breakfasted he started late in the afternoon from Golden Square, walked to Snawley's house at Somers Town, missed him and went on to the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill to see Squeers, missed him and proceeded to the Lambeth lodging, drew blank again and went on to Gride's, was refused admittance and went on to the Cheerybles in the City Square where he arrived between five and six o'clock fatigued. Here he sat down before taking a cab to the Police Office to see Squeers, then home to Golden Square having had no food since the previous night. At ten o'clock Tim fetched him in a coach to the Cheerybles again where he was confronted by Brooker. When he finally returned home he reached Golden Square about midnight and, just as a clock struck one, he hanged himself.

CHAPTER LX

1. YOUNG NORVAL OF PRIVATE LIFE. In " Douglas," a play by Rev. J Home (1724-1808), young Norval was the son of " a frugal swain whose constant care was to increase his store " and keep his only son at home. Squeers hoped that young Wackford would follow his own precepts and example.

2. THE POWDERED HEAD. The wig of the judge, of course.

CHAPTER LXIII

1. THE OLD CHURCH. See note 2 to Chapter XXXV.

CHAPTER LXIV

1. LEFT THEM ON THEIR ROAD TO LONDON. This should be " left *him.*" In Chapter XIII John Browdie lent Nicholas a sovereign and gave him a stout stick ; it was not till the next morning that he was joined by Smike.

2. BETWEEN SEVEN DIALS AND SOHO. This district has been a good deal altered since the book was written, by the construction of Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road ; the erection of huge blocks of buildings as well as theatres was undertaken in 1886 and subsequent years cleared away a number of insalubrious streets and alleys, but there still remain a few narrow thoroughfares.

2. IT BE THE GODFEYTHER. In Chapter XLII Nicholas asks to be made a godfather to John Browdie's first child.

PORTRAIT SOUGHT

Does any reader know of the existence of a portrait of Dickens's life-long friend, Thomas Mitton ?

FROM RECENT BOOKS

By Louis B. Frewer, M.A.
(Bodleian Library)

RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

" The leading vehicle of organisation was the United Committee of Churchmen and Dissenters of which the chairman was Lord Shaftesbury. There were many other committees functioning. Hundreds of thousands of unchurched people continued to flock to the services, thronging the theatres to capacity, with multitudes turned away.

" The theatre services were not greeted with unanimous approval. Charles Dickens mixed his approval and disapproval very thoroughly in his lengthy description of a service visited (*All the Year Round*, February 25th, 1860).

" Charles Dickens made reference to the Ulster Awakening in his writings. The novelist proclaimed the outbreak of hysteria and denied the reports of moral improvements by quoting Belfast statistics, ' those fatal figures, those unenthusiastic, disbelieving, obstinate statistics, to destroy all these beautiful assertions ' (*All the Year Round*, November 5th, 1859). It seems certain that Mr. Dickens shared the opinions of ' The Times ' of London, which in turn gleaned them from the ' Northern Whig ' of Belfast, for he quoted the contention that in Belfast ' the most immoral scenes take place on Sunday nights.' "—" The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain," by J. E. Orr. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott.)

* * * * *

HOGARTH AND DICKENS

" An artist may fall short of what I have called Hogarth's golden mean on either of two sides : the one side is the brittle coldness of Pope and Sheridan ; to see the other at its clearest we may turn to the richest comic genius of the next century, Dickens. It seems undeniable to the present writer that Dickens is a greater humorist than Pope and Sheridan as well as their natural descendants, Wilde and Shaw, because his range is so much wider than theirs. Subject matter must be considered in aesthetic judgments. Dickens realises that the highest humor, as opposed to mere impersonal wit, must include the fine vein of sympathy. Laughter need not necessarily be a part of it. We are more disposed to weep than to laugh at Joe Gargery in *Great Expectations* ; yet he is at once recognisable as an excellent comic character. His humor, like that of so many characters in Dickens, is the greater for being in large part wistfulness. Dickens proves the alliance of laughter and tears. We resist the softer emotions, for they are altruistic, but for the egotistical emotions of comedy we are eager. By making his audience laugh, the author destroys their emotional equilibrium, and while they are without their poise he can switch them into unrepressed pity. This subtle combination of opposites, known best to-day in the comedy of Charlie Chaplin, is at the root of Dickens's comic genius. It is comedy distinguished by a warmth unknown to any eighteenth century wit, Hogarth and Fielding not excepted.

" But Dickens has to pay the price of this warmth, and it is just here that Hogarth is superior to him. He does not achieve the balance of Hogarth for the opposite reason that Pope and Sheridan do not—sentimentality. *The Old Curiosity Shop* should have been one of the world's best comic novels, but unhappily such masterpieces as Dick Swiveller, the Marchioness, Sampson and Sally Brass, and Mrs. Jarley are dimmed by the ubiquitous presence of two of the most mawkish bores ever created, Little Nell and her grandfather. A comparison with Hogarth is illuminating, for Nell's grandfather meets the same end of Hogarth's Tom Rakewell—they both dissipate their wealth in gambling and come to almost immediate catastrophe because of it. The contrasting judgments which the two artists pass upon the catastrophe mark the difference between the most tasteless sort of Victorian sentimentality and gloriously-solid eighteenth century sobriety. Indeed Dickens shuts the door against judgment altogether and drowns his ending in tears. Although he does not condone the old man's folly, he completely forgives it and attempts to obscure all our other sentiments by means of pathos. Dickens's reason for pardoning him (I imagine) is the very reason that most modern readers would consign him to perdition : he is the grandfather of Little Nell. In too much human sympathy Dickens not only gets farther away from a true judgment than Hogarth but, ironically, farther away from the reader's sympathy also. The author's excess produces a dearth in the reader.

" Hogarth is altogether different. He looks at the rake's progress with compassion, but with sobriety, too. In the sixth picture Rakewell squanders his fortune in a gambler's den, in the seventh he is incarcerated without hope in a debtor's prison, and in the final scene he is a lunatic chained to the floor in Bedlam. Though it is a terrible ending Hogarth will not be sentimental, for Rakewell's own stupidity has brought him to this pass. It is folly, not tragedy. Yet the artist sympathises as he condemns . . . Rakewell's end is thus much more agonising than that of the Dickens character, because, far from sacrificing our standards of judgment, we are instead forced to keep them sharply intact. The denouement of " A Rake's Progress " is comic in the highest sense, for the catastrophe is deserved ; and it is tragic for the same reason. Dickens's tragic scenes fail ; Oscar Wilde dictated the reason when he remarked that no sensitive man could read the death of Little Nell without laughing."—" William Hogarth : The Golden Mean," by R. E. Moore, one of the contributions to " The Age of Johnson : Essays presented to Chauncey Brewster Tinker." (Yale Univ. Press.)

DICKENS AND SHAKESPEARE

" There is a certain parallel between the boyhoods of the two greatest creators of English character in letters, William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens : everything that Shakespeare may have endured, Dickens certainly suffered more acutely. Both boys witnessed parental decline and humiliating stress of poverty. John Shakespeare was in trouble with his creditors and the authorities : John Dickens muddled himself into a debtors' prison. William Shakespeare, according to Rowe, was withdrawn early from school, owing to the ' narrow circumstances ' of his father and, according to Aubrey, was put to the slaughter-house or at least the glove-shop. Dickens, too, had a broken schooling and was sent to the dark hell of the blacking-factory, the memory of which was to be always like a scar across his mind. Dickens, after escape from the factory and on leaving school, became clerk to a solicitor, and, after working all day at the law, studied shorthand and reporting most of the night. Both were, when they found their proper task in life, ferociously industrious. Both were self-educated in the sense that both possessed and exercised the greatest gift obtainable by any writer, what Dickens called ' the key of the street.' All the England that was shut off from these boys by social circumstances was open to the darting glance. Dickens felt very bitterly about his boyhood : Shakespeare, obviously, was never lacerated like that until he reached adolescence ; but school was a bore to him and there must have been something that burned in the very roots of his being before he left Stratford.

" The novels of Charles Dickens seem to present a full declaration of what the author believed, enjoyed, and hated. But the real Dickens was quite a different man from that image of Dickens which a reader may derive from the books.

" Charles Dickens found time to indulge his passion for amateur acting on the grand scale and for addressing audiences of all kinds, at dinners, meetings and at ' Readings,' while he was pouring out his immense novels, along with articles and short stories, editing, quarrelling, travelling and generally conducting a life for which the word full is wholly inadequate. Shakespeare was a man of that nimbleness : to his speed with a pen his colleagues attested ; he may also have learned a part as quickly as he wrote one.

" Amateurs are as stubborn as professionals. When Charles Dickens ought to have been writing or resting and getting his blood-pressure down, he was stumping the country as an amateur actor, storming the stages, overworking the box-offices, and lifting the roof." —" Shakespeare," by Ivor Brown. (Collins.)

* * * * *

SOUTHERN NATIONALISM

" Imitators of Scott such as G. P. R. James typify the predominant mood of their day in more representative fashion than the towering figure of Charles Dickens.

" The stage was now set for Southern romanticism to develop along clearly discernible lines. Ideas, associated with the movement in Europe and the North, were continuing to arrive—notions matured by Carlyle, Hugo, Michelet, Dickens, Cooper, Irving . . .

" Avoidance as well as acceptance suggests the impact of romanticism on Southern thought. The people of the North read Dickens until the names of his characters became household words. His popularity in New England and the Middle Atlantic States brought the creator of *Oliver Twist* and of the *Christmas Carol* to American shores, where he increased his revenues on the lecture platform. Virginians did not wait for the jibes and the criticisms of the *American Notes* to decide that they had no use for a national guest deficient in manners. Virginians rejected him flatly, as soon as his books appeared, and with what they intended to be lofty contempt.

" A few Carolina intellectuals seem to have shown some appreciation for Dickens (an illustration of the Charleston attitude is a sympathetic essay, entitled ' The Novels of Charles Dickens,' appearing in the *Southern Quarterly Review*, III (April, 1843), 431-448.) But Southerners, on the whole, checked his potential influence on their thinking by keeping him outside of the cordon sanitaire. A reviewer for the *Messenger* declared, in 1837 :

> ' A writer who chooses to be known to the literary world by the name of " Boz" has for some time past been exhibiting his antics before the public. We have never sought his acquaintance for the same reason that we should avoid a fellow who might thrust himself into an assembly room, and invite the notice of the company by the dress and grimaces of a Merry Andrew. We would ask ourselves . . . what man capable of refinement would choose to be a buffoon . . . Can we be blamed for coming to a somewhat similar conclusion in the case of a writer who thinks proper to announce himself by such a mountebank designation as that of " Boz." ' (*Southern Literary Messenger*, III, May, 1837, 223-224.)

" The reviewer adds that, impelled by the enthusiasm of Northern periodicals for Dickens's works, he decided to read *Tulrumble* and *Oliver Twist*. At last, he reports, he accomplished ' the loathsome task of reading the volumes through.' When he finished, he determined that he would use his best efforts to keep all potential readers in the South from wasting their time or money on novels by ' Mr. Boz.' Dickens, the critic concluded, has ' no idea of character beyond the grand division of fools and knaves.'

" Four months later, the same reviewer not only attacked *The Pickwick Papers* in a lead article in the *Messenger* but replied to Northern critics of his review of *Oliver Twist*. J. K. Paulding and Manuel M. Noah, both of New York City, had advanced to the defence of the English novelist. The *Messenger's* reviewer acknowledged their indignant comment with this retort, ' The [Southern] reader will appreciate our astonishment on finding that this very act [the original attack on Dickens] had aroused a host of enemies, by whom a

shower of puny missiles has been launched against us.' (*Southern Literary Messenger*, III, September, 1837, 525-532.)

" The basic explanation for the rejection of Dickens slipped into this commentary on *The Pickwick Papers*. The evidence is clear that the South was selecting, consciously and carefully, what it would read, in 1837 :

' We have no great cities on this side of the Potomac, and therefore no mobs, civil or literary. Our slaves are not recognised as either members of the Body Politic or the Republic of Letters. We stand on our defense against imported innovations. We fight *pro aris et focis*, and, if Mr. Noah does not approve our endeavor to repel all foreign invasions of our rights of property or taste, we are willing to stand condemned.' (*Ibid.*)

" The Old South regarded itself as the epitome of the chivalric ideal and as the champion of the man who, more than all others, had taught it that ideal. When the vogue for Dickens swept the North in the years before the Civil War, Southerners were quick to resent any contrast between the hated ' Boz ' and the author of *Waverley*, which might be disadvantageous to the latter. Such impertinence demanded an immediate retort. In 1856, *Putnam's Magazine* of New York City carried an article by George W. Curtis which compared humanitarian Dickens with undemocratic Scott. Richmond's *Southern Literary Messenger* attacked the comparison with a vitriolic essay entitled ' Portrait of Sir Walter Scott.'

' According to his [Curtis's] view, the Wizard of the North was " a border baron of literature," a man " who accepted his social superiority as a fixed fact," one " who had no sympathy with men as men," but " as a landlord with his tenants," and who was " the last laureate of feudalism." . . . On the other hand, Mr. Dickens is the representative of the age, the Columbus of Humanity, the discoverer of the great truth that the poor, the degraded, the vicious and the criminal are still men and women, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh . . .

' Let us grant that he was a Tory and a Loyalist, that his opinions, in favour of hereditary monarchy and aristocracy were overstrained . . . Were these other than the natural results of his birth, his education, and the experience of the tumultuous times in which he lived ? . . .

' We wonder whether Mr. Curtis has read the novels of Sir Walter Scott . . . Let him read Scott for two or three years and then try his hand at another lecture.' (XXII, April, 1856, 291-294.)

" But the *Messenger* does more than indicate the ' carriers ' of European romanticism which found favor in the Upper South. It introduces also some potential ' carriers ' which received cool receptions there. Heading this list are Dickens, Coleridge, and Shelley from across the Atlantic, together with Emerson and Melville from the foreign land north of the Pennsylvania border."—" Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South," by R. G. Osterweis. (Yale Univ. Press.)

* * * * *

TOLSTOY

" Apart from writing (Tolstoy) read anything he could get his hands on in this frontier town, and he also sent home for books. There was not much to be had in fiction, but he read Pushkin, Lermontov, and Grigorovich, Rousseau, Dumas, and Sue, and Sterne and Dickens. The last two especially delighted him. ' What a charm has *David Copperfield*,' he wrote in his diary. Dickens became his favourite English author. He generously admitted to his ' tremendous influence '* and called him the most Christian of all English novelists. Dickens's affection for ordinary people and his constant concern for the betterment of his readers won Tolstoy's admiration.†

" At this time Tolstoy entered a significant literary observation in his notebook : ' The first condition of an author's popularity, i.e., the way to make himself loved, is the love with which he treats all his characters. That is why Dickens's characters are the friends of all mankind ; they serve as a bond between humanity in America and in Petersburg ; but Thackeray and Gogol, though faithful to life and artistic, are pitiless and not at all loving.'

" Tolstoy did find some things to his liking in London. He daily visited the Kensington Museum and pronounced it the best institution of higher learning that he had seen in his travels. He also heard Dickens—' a genius born once in a hundred years,' he declared deliver a lecture on education.

" Tolstoy encouraged ' Intermediary ' not only with contributions of his own, but also with suggestions of works that might be printed. These were all the books that he had read and valued highly : Dickens's short stories, *Oliver Twist*, *Little Dorrit*, *Bleak House*, and *Edwin Drood* . . .

" As examples of this highest art ' flowing from love of God and man . . . in literature,' Tolstoy mentioned : Schiller's ' The Robbers ' ; Hugo's ' Les Miserables ' and ' Les Pauvres Gens ' ; Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *The Chimes* ; ' Uncle Tom's Cabin ' ; Dostoyevsky's works, especially ' The House of the Dead ' ; and George Eliot's ' Adam Bede.'

" With qualifications, and only because of their inner contempt, Tolstoy cited as examples of good universal art produced by the upper classes : ' Don Quixote,' Moliere's comedies, *David Copperfield* and *Pickwick Papers* ; and the Tales of Gogol and Pushkin."—" Leo Tolstoy," by E. J. Simmons. (Lehmann.)

* A good case can be made out for the influence of *David Copperfield* on " Childhood."

† In a letter in 1904, he paid the following tribute in English : " I think that Charles Dickens is the greatest novel writer of the 19th century, and that his works, impressed with the true Christian spirit, have done and will continue to do a great deal of good to mankind."

ORATOR HENLEY

" In the second half of his play (' The Author's Farce ') Fielding gave what he described as a ' Puppet Show ' . . . He brought on the stage ' The Goddess of Nonsense,' who had with her an ' Orator on a Tub,' who preached or spoke a ridiculous sermon or oration all about a violin. This was a direct hit at a man called Henley, who had set up what he called an Oratory in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he preached sermons of the most obvious kind on everyday subjects, such as fish—proving to his own satisfaction that all mankind are fish and live like fishes—and yet gulling his audience into believing him to be a man of wisdom. He was evidently the forerunner of Dickens's immortal Chadband.

" After that performance something of note happened in his [Macready's] dressing-room. His friend Forster called round to congratulate him and brought a young gentleman whom he desired to present to Macready. This young man was introduced by the name of Dickens, Mr. Charles Dickens—*alias* ' Boz.' That Haymarket dressing-room meeting started a friendship between actor and novelist which lasted a lifetime."—" Haymarket, Theatre of Perfection," by W. Macqueen-Pope. (Allen.)

* * * * *

MRS. GASKELL

" Almost before she knew what she was doing she was in London breakfasting at Samuel Roger's with Dickens and the Macreadys . . . In 1850 Dickens opened the year well for Mrs. Gaskell. He invited her to contribute to the inaugural number of *Household Words*. To this request she submitted ' Lizzie Leigh.' Unworthy of much comment—this story concerns a prodigal daughter; its main argument is forgiveness, and through love, redemption. Sentimental treatment impairs the effect.

" The very fact that she never intended to prolong the ' Cranford ' episodes beyond the first two chapters in which Miss Jenkyns and Captain Brown are disposed of; the very unpremeditated nature of the resuscitated sequel is, more than anything else, a testimony to Mrs. Gaskell's extraordinary powers of improvisation. Had it not been that Dickens was so pleased with the first instalment, and that the characters immediately assumed an individual significance for so many people, nothing might have been heard of the tale again.

" Between 1858 and 1864, the year of ' Cousin Phillis ' and ' Sylvia's Lovers,' little but short stories and other miscellaneous contributions were published in the magazines. Latterly she had shown signs of resenting the editorial tyranny of Dickens, and had attempted to free herself from *Household Words*. She had been writing for ' Harper's ' in 1858, and in 1860 for the ' Cornhill.' "—" Mrs. Gaskell," by Yvonne ffrench. (Home & Van Thal.)

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DICKENS AND THE PUPPETS

" Before taking leave of Richard Brickell we may see how his ' curious musical machine ' presented the tragedy of Bateman; the theme had charmed him since he took part in its puppet presentation and he had redone it for clockworks . . . This is quite different, by the way, from *The Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman*, which struck the funny bones of Cruikshank, Dickens, and Thackeray in the next century.

" Both Mrs. Trollope and Dickens, not looking in the right places or arriving at the right season for puppets, commented on their absence in America . . . Charles Dickens, arriving in New York in April, 1842, observed, ' But how quiet the streets are ! By day, are there no Punches, Fantoccini . . . ? No, not one.' (*American Notes*.) April is apt to be rather inclement for street shows in New York, and even Dickens, a theatre enthusiast, would have disliked Punch's nasty American habit of spitting.

" Though Dickens commented on the absence of Punch from the streets of America, two Punch men claimed that he had seen them. The ' History of O. B. Hubbard's Celebrated London Punch and Judy . . . ', Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1874 (a copy is in the Harvard Library), maintained, ' When Charles Dickens visited this country a few years ago—he was stopping in New York while I was playing at Brooklyn—he came to see me. The next day there came out, in the New York " Times," a whole column telling the public the pleasure that would be derived from this innocent amusement.' This story has not been located as yet; Hubbard quoted from it. Dickens was in New York in December, 1867, and January, February and April, 1868. E. Beck told a reporter of the Frankfort, Pennsylvania, ' Register ' in May, 1896, that he and his brother, who had been acrobats in England, ' first introduced Punch and Judy to the American people in the streets of Brooklyn ' in the spring of 1866, when Dickens had seen them and declared that ' the American eagle would shelter with its wings many more such shows,' which sounds too benign for Dickens in America.

" Lime Street, Liverpool, is distinguished in the annals of puppetry not only for the pitch of Richard Codman's Punch and Judy—that Codman whose family name was made into Codlin for the Punch man in Dickens's *Old Curiosity Shop*, and who himself ' crossed the Atlantic twice and gave his show in America where it was as popular ' as in England, according to the reminiscences of ' Nomad ' in ' The World's Fair '—but as a street bounding St. George's Hall, in which in the last century was the American Bar where showmen met to discuss business.

" Charles Dickens made a sympathetic and humorous report of an Italian puppet show at Genoa in his *Pictures from Italy*."—" The Puppet Theatre in America," by P. McPharlin. (Harper.)

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

" Other works which Hawthorne read aloud during the winter of 1850-51 were G. W. Curtis's *Nile Notes of a Howadji*, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, Pope's *Epistles*, a good deal of Southey and De Quincey, and *David Copperfield*. Sophia delighted in these readings, especially in her husband's rendering of Dickens. ' I cannot tell,' she wrote in her diary, ' how much I enjoy *David Copperfield* made vocal by him. He reads so wonderfully. Each person is so distinct ; his tones are so various, apt, and rich . . . It is better than any acting I ever saw on the stage.'

" But he preferred to remain at Black Heath on the warm, sunny days loitering through *Dombey and Son*, intermingled with much talk . . .

" [James Russell Lowell, in a letter to Miss Norton, snobbishly ridiculed [Franklin] Pierce, whom he had just met in Hawthorne's company, as the true original of Elijah Pogram in Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*." —" Nathaniel Hawthorne," by Randall Stewart. (Yale Univ. Press.)

* * * * *

SLAVE TRADE

" The ' Anti-Coercionists ' . . . wished to preserve the squadron, but to use it exclusively for the protection of the palm oil trade—the close connection between slavery and piracy having apparently escaped their attention . . . Support also came from a navel element which, whilst fully realising the horrors of the trade from personal experience, was pessimistic about the feasibility of suppressing it—men like Huntley or Commodore Hotham. *The Times* and other daily papers consistently supported this view ; and then there was Dickens, whose portrait of Mrs. Jellyby in *Bleak House* certainly did the cause of suppression no good. She is described as ' a lady of remarkable strength of character, who has devoted herself to an extensive variety of public subjects, at various times, and especially to the subject of Africa with a view to the general cultivation of the coffee berry and the natives, and the happy settlement of our super-abundant home population in Borrioboola-Gha on the left bank of the Niger'.

" Some said she was a portrait of Harriet Martineau, but that lady never recognised herself, though she reviewed the book. Dickens at this time was certainly guying a number of his acquaintances, but in this instance he was certainly attacking the sillier disciples of Buxton, the busybodies who might be seen every week at Exeter Hall. In any case Lord Denham, in a review of this book and of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which was published about the same time, took Dickens to task for making unnecessarily difficult what the latter knew to be a public duty. Needless to say, such reviews had no influence at all on the sales of *Bleak House*, which sold nearly twice as well as *David Copperfield*, its predecessor."—" The Navy and the Slave Trade," by C. Lloyd. (Longmans.)

* * * * *

DICKENS ON THE FILMS, 1906-1914

" *Oliver Twist* : Vitagraph, July, 1909 ; Cines, April, 1911 ; Hepworth, July, 1912; *Christmas Carol* : Edison, November, 1911 ; Zenith, September, 1913 ; London Film Company, January, 1914. *Martin Chuzzlewit* : Edison, February, 1912. *Nicholas Nickleby* : Thanhouser, November, 1912. *The Old Curiosity Shop* : Pathé. February, 1912 ; Hepworth, January, 1914. *David Copperfield* : Pathé, February, 1912 ; Hepworth, August, 1913. *The Pickwick Papers* : Vitagraph, May, 1913. *The Chimes* : Hepworth, July, 1914. *The Cricket on the Hearth* : American firm, February, 1914.

" Dickens was in a class by himself in the midst of the Victorian welter of historical romance and social realism. To film makers all over the world he was second only to Shakespeare as a source of material. His works occupied a particularly important position in the British revival, for Hepworth, seeking to keep pace with the great world producers and at the same time retain his reputation for a characteristically English atmosphere, found in the novels of Dickens and the services of the Dickensian character-actor Thomas Bentley the ideal channel for his desired development. Hence the first Hepworth film which ventured over the 3,000-ft. limit was Bentley's production of *Oliver Twist* (3,700 ft., released October, 1912) made in late 1912, some twelve months after the company's revival had begun. It was received rapturously. A second followed next year, *David Copperfield*, which was more than twice as long—an extraordinary length for a British film. And in early 1914 *The Old Curiosity Shop* (5,300 ft., released January, 1914), the third and according to contemporary judgment the best, received such praise as had hitherto been reserved for foreign epics.

" It is possible to question the *Bioscope's* enthusiastic assertion that Dickens himself had been improved. Again and again the realism of the productions, their resemblance to real life, was praised without questioning whether realism was in fact the essence of Dickens's genius. ' A page torn from the book of life ' could hardly be confused with a page torn from a book of Dickens. Yet the distorting-mirror of his characterisation was smoothed out in the monumental task of compressing his discursive stories into comprehensive yet comprehensible silent screen-plays, and the result was a series of careful story treatments which made good films but were hardly all that was claimed for them.

" [Chapter 7, is an Analysis of Three Films, i.e. of *Richard III*, *East Lynne*, and *David Copperfield* : the latter was the production mentioned above by Thomas Bentley for the Hepworth Company and released in August, 1913, of 7,500 feet."]—" The History of the British Film," 1906-1914, by Rachael Low. (Allen & Unwin.)

SPORT AND PASTORAL LIFE

" The change in the views upon youth and education in the first half of the nineteenth century is clearly shown in Dickens's books. Mr. Dombey, the heartless and wealthy City man, who wants to make a gentleman of his boy, sends him to Mr. Blimber's School where the little six-year-old Paul had to read Greek and Latin from morning till night. But even in this old-fashioned school there was a foreboding of the times to come. It is found in the room of Mr. Feeder the young assistant master where delicate little Paul was allowed to sit in his leisure hours. Mr. Feeder in his cupboard had a rod, a flute, a pair of boxing-gloves and other strange things which Mr. Feeder did not know how to use. But he had them, for when he could find time for it ; some day he was going to make a point of learning how to use them. It is the old English sporting traditions which had been put aside, but which the next generation was to bring to light again. After intricacies which it takes hundreds of pages to describe the reader finally sees how the severe and self-satisfied Dombey is softened and how his mind alters so much, that he is able to enjoy watching his grand-child at play. That little boy, also called Paul, was to be educated to become a gentleman in quite a different way : in the last pages of the book we find the white-haired grandfather and the little fellow playing together on the sand beach. Mr. Dombey is the nineteenth-century Englishman, who learns to give the childlike and primitive in human nature the place it deserved. The ' back to Nature movement ' of the eighteenth century had led to sentimental love of nature rather than to practical education and hygiene. This move-ment of the eighteenth century is strikingly personified in the affected old Mrs. Skewton, a painted corpse who constantly talks of how much better the world would be if only people had more heart and were more natural and who says to Mr. Dombey : ' I assure you, Mr. Dombey, Nature intended me for an Arcadian. I am thrown away in society. Cows are my passion. What I have ever sighed for, has been to retreat to a Swiss farm, and live entirely surrounded by cows—and china.' The English landscape garden was created by such people, who loved cows and pastoral life—especially reproduced in china ; but their posterity of the nineteenth century discovered that they need not content them-selves with merely *looking* at the Arcadian landscapes, they might use the gardens, *use them for playing and sports*. They found true recreation, just the relaxation which the many dignified and busy Mr. Dombeys of the City needed."—" London, the Unique City," by S. E. Rasmussen. (Cape.)

* * * * *

SCOTT AND HEMINGWAY

Tristam Shandy is perhaps the only novel in the English language which is humorous in its construction, humorous, that is to say, through and through. And this means that what Sterne created was not merely a few comic figures inhabiting the world of ordinary feet, as Fielding and Scott and Dickens did, but a world of comic entities in which not merely his human figures, but everything from man down to the homunculus, are forms of humour.

His [Scott's] genius and his ambition pulled him in opposite directions. His ambition was not to be known as a great writer, but to achieve a distinguished position in society and to live a life of traditional grandeur in the Border country and of social influence in Edinburgh. Wordsworth did not know that division, nor on a different level did Dickens ; their genius and their ambition were set in the same direction ; they put all of themselves into their work ; they had no Abbotsford.

We tend to think of his characters as simple characters ; yet if we examine them we discover that hardly one is simple. Compared with those of Dickens or Fielding or Thackeray, they have infinite light and shade ; though the light is so exactly where it should be, and the shadow falls so naturally, that we scarcely notice it.

Scott's persons support their appropriate characters with unexampled eloquence, yet with the most exact proportion. Mr. Forster once remarked that the whole of Mrs. Micawber could be summed up in the sentence : " I shall never desert Mr. Micawber." Scott's characters cannot be contained in such formulas. They are not made up of one or two set qualities like the charcters of Dickens : we feel they are moulded from the substance of which human life is made, and contain all or almost all its attributes, the only difference between one character and another being that these attributes are com-pounded in different proportions.

An idea of the change in our attitude to human life may be had by comparing any character in Dickens with any character in the early work of Mr. Ernest Hemingway. Dickens was an emotional writer, but he still knew that there was in the individual a struggle between impulse and reason. He was not a religious writer, but his characters still lived on a plane which was partly spiritual and partly natural. Mr. Hemingway's early characters live on the natural plane alone. The two gunmen in his short story, *The Killers*, are mechanical murderers, and their victim a mechanical murderer ; they are all equally conditioned ; and there is nothing to be said about them, except that they evoke the kind of pity and horror one might feel in watching some hunting beast pulling down and killing its prey.

Turn from this to Dickens. Jonas Chuzzlewit too is a murderer, but he never suggests to our minds the picture of an animal armed with a gun or a knife ; he remains a human being with thoughts and emotions, horrible enough, certainly, yet drawn from the general source of human thought and emotion.—" Essays on Literature and Society," by Edwin Muir. (Hogarth Press.)

The Dickens Fellowship

(*Branch Reports of not more than* 200 *words are invited for inclusion on this page. Press cuttings are not acceptable.*)

A landmark in the history of the Wellington Branch was celebrated recently by a presentation made to Miss L. M. McKenzie in recognition of her ten years' service to the Branch as Hon. Secretary. On behalf of the members, the President presented her with a reading-lamp and copies of works of Dickens. It is to the enthusiastic service of such officers that the Dickens Fellowship owes its continued prosperity.

Congratulations to Mr. C. H. Blackford and Miss E. D. Guise of the Redditch Branch who were married at the Parish Church there on December 28th last.

The following overseas visitors to London are offered a cordial welcome: Mrs. Holland of Adelaide, Miss E. P. Phelan and Miss S. G. Stowers of Boston, Mrs. B. Lee of Sydney.

We deeply regret to record the death of Mr. W. H. Austin of Gloucester, Mrs. Edith Kelly of Palos Verdes, Mrs. G. H. Mackrell of Manchester, Mrs. E. Malschinger of H.Q. St. Pancras, and Mr. C. E. Newbery of Southend, and Mrs. A. Johnson (Mrs. J. E. Whatley) of Blackburn.

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DICKENSIANA

" Dickens and Thackeray at Christmas " (Frank Swinnerton), *John o' London's Weekly*, November 25th.
" Pickwick Lives For Ever," Clifton Fadiman, *Atlantic Monthly*, December.
" The Antient Society of Cogers," J. H. Thomas, *Chambers Journal*, December.
" Once the Property of Dickens " (a watch), J. McCook, *Everybody's Weekly*, December 17th.
" Surviving Links with Dickens," Sketches (in colour), by W. P. Robins, *The Sphere*, Christmas Number.

Professor Edgar Johnson of New York has kindly drawn our attention to the following American articles not hitherto recorded in *The Dickensian* :

" Longfellow and Dickens," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, *Cambridge (Mass.) Historical* Society, Vol. 28, 1942.
" Dickens's Dark Novels, 1851-1857," Lionel Stevenson, *Sewanee Review*, Summer Number, 1943.
" The Second Birth of the English Novel," Lionel Stevenson, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XIV, 4, July, 1945.
" Our Mutual Friend," Robert Morse, *Partisan Review*, XVI, 3, March, 1949.
" Dickens, Fagin and Mr. Riah," by Edgar Johnson, Commentatry, January, 1950.
" The England of Marx and Mill as reflected in Fiction," Wm. O. Aydelotte, *The Journal of Economic History, Supp.* VIII, *The Tasks of Economic History*.

CORRIGENDA

Apologies are offered for errors in our December Number. On page 31 read Collin Brooks for Colin Brooks. On page 25 read *The French Revolution* for *Frederick the Great*, and on page 24 read Bill Sikes for Bill Sykes.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

LONDON MEETINGS

Thurs., Mar. 16—Dickens on the Stage. Mr. W. MacQueen Pope.

Sat., ,, 25—The Forster Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum. Party limited to 20.

Mon., April 17—Annual General Meeting, followed by an open debate on " The London versus the Country Scenes in *David Copperfield*," and

The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens

Papers on this theme, to be read at this meeting, are invited. They must be clearly written or typewritten and of not more than 1,500 words. Each entry must be signed by a pseudonym and the writer's real name and address must be attached, in a sealed envelope bearing the pseudonym on the outside. Entries must be received by the Hon. Secretary at the Dickens House, not later than than March 30th.

Sat., ,, 22—Two Performances at 2-30 and 7-30 of

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